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POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND DEMOCRACY:
THE CASE OF PANAMA

by

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March 1998

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This thesis comparatively analyzes the level of political party institutionalization in Panama, and its impact on democracy in that country. In addition, the thesis examines the role that the United States has played in shaping Panama's transition to democracy.

The thesis concludes that the initial signs and indicators of a healthy political party system are evident in Panama. Panama's political party institutionalization has moved from an inchoate category (1969 to 1989), to an advancing category after the U.S. intervention of 1989. Despite major obstacles, Panama's advancing level of political party institutionalization could lead to a fully institutionalized system and a consolidated democracy.

The thesis also concludes that it is unlikely that Panama's political party system could have been further institutionalized without the U.S. intervention of 1989 and the subsequent U.S. policy of democratic engagement and enlargement. That institutionalization has facilitated the ongoing consolidation of democracy in Panama.

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POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND DEMOCRACY: *THE CASE OF PANAMA*

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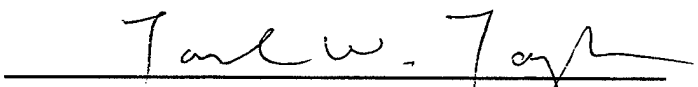
Author: 

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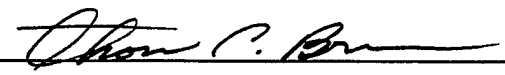
Approved by: 

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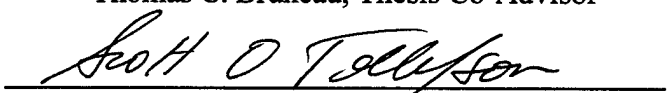

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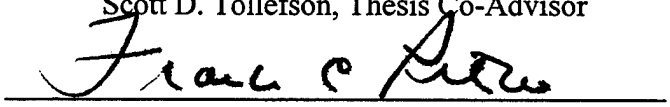

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ABSTRACT

This thesis comparatively analyzes the level of political party institutionalization in Panama, and its impact on democracy in that country. In addition, the thesis examines the role that the United States has played in shaping Panama's transition to democracy.

The thesis concludes that the initial signs and indicators of a healthy political party system are evident in Panama. Panama's political party institutionalization has moved from an inchoate category (1968 to 1989), to an advancing category after the U.S. intervention of 1989. Despite major obstacles, Panama's advancing level of political party institutionalization could lead to a fully institutionalized system and a consolidated democracy.

The thesis also concludes that it is unlikely that Panama's political party system could have been further institutionalized without the U.S. intervention of 1989 and the subsequent U.S. policy of democratic engagement and enlargement. That institutionalization has facilitated the ongoing consolidation of democracy in Panama.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Panama is attempting to consolidate its democracy and stabilize its political system a short eight years after the United States intervened (December 1989) to overthrow the Manuel Noriega regime.

This thesis examines the history and development of Panamanian political parties and the impact that United States foreign policy has had on shaping Panama's democracy. Some of the major questions this thesis addresses include the following: How did Panama's party system evolve? What factors contributed to its shape, historically, and are those factors present today? How did the United States invasion of 1989 affect that political system, and what has been the long-term effect of United States foreign policy on democratic transition and consolidation in Panama?

The research presented in this thesis suggests that the initial signs and indicators of a fairly healthy political party system are evident in Panama. Remarkably, Panamanian political parties and fundamental democratic principles appear to have been reaffirmed in the 1990s. This has occurred in spite of 21 years of near dictatorial rule, and over a century of U.S. intervention.

The thesis presents an empirical case study analyzing the level of Panamanian political party system institutionalization. Distinction is drawn between the

formal constitutional structure and the actual level of democracy. As a framework for analysis, this thesis uses the model of political party institutionalization developed by Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully. The development and history of Panama's political parties as well as the impact of United States foreign policy on Panama's democratic transition and consolidation is presented.

Where does Panama belong, if at all, in the Mainwaring and Scully model? This thesis places Panama within the Mainwaring and Scully categories and assesses the adequacy of the model. The regularity and patterns of political party competition, major political party stability, electoral legitimacy, and political party organization, are used as independent variables to judge the level of political party institutionalization.

Mainwaring and Scully maintain that the level of political party institutionalization affects the process of democratic consolidation within a state. Political party institutionalization is not a sufficient condition for democracy, but is a necessary condition. Specifically, the higher the level of institutionalization, the greater the likelihood that system will experience full democratic consolidation. In contrast, the lower the level of institutionalization, the more that system will hinder democratic consolidation.

The thesis concludes that it is unlikely that Panama's political party system would have been able to further institutionalize without the United States intervention in December 1989. That institutionalization has facilitated the ongoing consolidation of democracy in Panama.

The thesis also concludes that the analytical framework that Mainwaring and Scully posit is adequate to the extent that it provides the conceptual tools to analyze the electoral and party factors present in a country. The model falls short in that it does not accurately depict a more varied stratum of possibilities; it could be improved by adding a fourth category, an advancing party group as shown in Figure 4.1, page 95, "Modified Model of Latin America Political Party Institutionalization." The fourth category, the advancing group, is where Panama should be placed.

Additionally, the prospects for the further development of an improved bilateral relationship between the United States and Panama are good, assuming that there are no radical changes in either country that would call into question the political and economic realities on which the current relationship is based.

For Egda, Hollywood, Molongulinas,

Wes O'Fox O'Mula, and Wheatey

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The usual disclaimer absolving all persons from any opinions, interpretations, or conclusions contained in this thesis applies here, as I bear sole responsibility for the material presented herein, and the analysis of it. This does not mean that I have no debts. Quite the contrary, for I am indebted to many individuals for their guidance in the completion of this thesis.

I extend my sincere thanks to Drs. Scott Tollefson and Thomas Bruneau, without whose superb guidance and academic insight this thesis would not have been possible. *Muito obrigado por tudo.* I am also grateful to the many distinguished professors and lecturers at the Naval Postgraduate School, each of whom contributed to my individual learning process.

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To my sweet wife I say thank you, to my children I would that you would remember to, " . . . forsake not the law of thy mother: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee." Proverbs 6:20-22

I. INTRODUCTION

When viewed in comparative perspective, Panama's political party system does not immediately stand out as much different from that of other Latin American countries. On the surface, Panama appears to share a similar history of oligarchic and dictatorial rule characterized by *personalismo*, or dominance of an individual (often a charismatic personality).[1] However, further examination of Panama's political party system is warranted because Panama is attempting to consolidate its democracy and stabilize its political system a short eight years after the United States intervened (December 1989) to overthrow the Manuel Noriega regime (August 1983 to December 1989). A stable democracy in Panama is important to U.S. interests because of Panama's unique geographic location and history as a military, financial, and mercantile center in the Caribbean and Latin America.

The United States intervention in December of 1989 sought to externally impose democracy in Panama, but various obstacles have challenged democratization. As this thesis demonstrates, old party elites emerged from the authoritarian years to engage in the democratic process. Often the parties

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[1] Ernest E. Rossi, and Jack C. Plano, Latin America: A Political Dictionary (ABC-CLIO, 1992), p. 59.

have used the institutional mechanisms designed by the authoritarian regime to exclude political parties.[2] The thesis concludes that the political party system in Panama since the U.S. invasion resembles the party system which was in place prior to 1968.

A. BACKGROUND

Panama, independent since 1903, holds the unique position of belonging in whole to neither Central America, South America nor the Caribbean, but has deep-seated cultural, economic and political ties to each. For centuries, the territory now known as Panama has served as a land bridge and transit zone between continents and oceans. Additionally, the United States has played an enormous role in the formulation and execution of Panamanian affairs.

From the creation of the Panama Canal (1870 to 1914),[3]

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[2] David Pion-Berlin explains in part why old party elites are able to flourish in the recovery of democracy. See David Pion-Berlin, Through Corridors of Power: Institutions of Civil-Military Relations in Argentina (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), pp. 1-15.

[3] The creation of the Panama Canal would see one nation, France, rocked to its foundations and another nation, Colombia, lose its most prized possession, the isthmus of Panama. The Canal also marked the rise of the United States to a world power and left Nicaragua which had been vying for a place on the international stage to wait for the future. A new nation, the Republic of Panama, was born, and what some would call the 'greatest liberty ever taken with nature' was executed across her borders. See David McCullough The Path Between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870 -

to the demise of the Noriega regime, the United States has acted with near impunity in Panama. The Canal Zone was considered a virtual part of the United States, functioning as such, until the Torrijos-Carter treaty of 1977 established procedures for return of the Canal, the Zone, and other U.S.-held territory to Panama.[4]

Although the cultural and economic foundations of Panama are important, the focus of this thesis is the history and development of Panamanian political parties and the impact that U.S. foreign policy has had on Panama's democracy. Why the focus on political parties?

As differing social and political groups evolved over the years in Panama, political parties never played an all-encompassing, primary role in shaping events. However, political parties have long been active participants in Panama's governmental history as well as in everyday Panamanian life. In order to place the analysis of the political party institutionalization in contextual perspective, a look at the historical foundations of Panama's political party roots is presented in Chapter III.

The focus of the thesis is not merely the presence of Panamanian parties, but the institutionalization of the

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1914 (Simon and Schuster, 1977) for an authoritative account of the building and initial operation of the Panama Canal.

[4] Lawrence O. Ealy, Yanqui Politics and the Isthmian Canal (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971) is an excellent description of United States influence in Panama.

political party system. Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully argue that political systems in Latin America vary in terms of their level of institutionalization. They also maintain that the level of political party institutionalization affects the process of democratic consolidation within a state.[5]

Larry Diamond suggests that weak political institutions are a factor in democratic erosion and corrosive to democratic processes,[6] and Guillermo O'Donnell argues that lack of political party institutionalization is one of the factors which keeps democracies at the delegative level as opposed to the fully representative level.[7] It is within this theoretical context that this thesis investigates the level of political party institutionalization in Panama.

B. SCOPE

This thesis examines the history and development of

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[5] Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 1.

[6] Larry Diamond, "Democracy in Latin America: Degrees, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation" in Tom Farer, ed., Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 63.

[7] Guillermo O'Donnell, "Delegative Democracy" in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds., The Global Resurgence of Democracy (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 95.

Panamanian political parties and the impact that United States foreign policy has had on shaping Panama's democracy. Some of the major questions this thesis addresses include the following: How did Panama's party system evolve? What factors contributed to its shape, historically, and are those factors present today? How did the United States invasion of 1989 affect that political system, and what has been the long-term effect of U.S. foreign policy on democratic transition and consolidation in Panama?

The research presented in this thesis suggests that the initial signs and indicators of a fairly healthy political party system are evident in Panama, and the factors and underlying currents of their political system are sound. Remarkably, Panamanian political parties and fundamental democratic principles appear to have been reaffirmed in the 1990s. This has occurred in spite of 21 years of near dictatorial rule, and over a century of U.S. intervention.

There exists an abundance of good literature and research on many aspects of Panamanian militarism, economic foundations, social structures, as well as the overwhelming influence of the United States in Panamanian domestic and foreign affairs. The Bibliography included in this thesis lists many of these works. However, given the more limited scope of this thesis, these topics are not covered. The scope of this thesis is limited to the level of Panama's political party system institutionalization, the factors that

have directly affected the party system, and the impact of U.S. foreign policy on Panamanian democracy.

C. METHODOLOGY/THEORY

This thesis presents a case study of Panama utilizing Mainwaring and Scully's institutionalization model of political party systems as an analytical tool.[8] I look at the development and history of Panama's political parties as well as the impact of United States foreign policy on Panama's democratic transition and consolidation.

Mainwaring and Scully argue that in Latin America, countries fall into one of three broad categories: inchoate, institutionalized, or hegemonic, depending upon the level of political party system institutionalization. Countries characterized by institutionalized political party systems are those whose parties' share of votes are usually reasonably stable from one election to the next.[9]

Described in terms of electoral volatility, party systems in the institutionalized group are the lowest among the study group. The major political parties have moderately strong roots in their respective societies, as well as fairly strong identities which place them as recognizable, finite

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[8] Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 1-10.

[9] Ibid., p. 17.

groups. Political parties are primary actors in the institutionalized group countries. They shape, to a large degree, the electoral process and determine who governs the country, as opposed to being merely subjugated to the political desires of charismatic leaders.[10]

Countries characterized by inchoate party systems are those whose parties are generally weak and often fragmented. Inchoate party systems are neither stable in the long term nor solid in the short term. Electoral volatility is high, and the party roots in their respective societies are weak. In inchoate party systems, various personalities have, historically, tended to dominate parties and campaigns.[11]

Countries characterized by hegemonic party systems fall in between the institutionalized and inchoate party system countries. In the case of Mexico, dominant one-party rule is in the process of evolving to a less authoritarian structure; however, the process must continue in order for true political party system institutionalization to strengthen. In some aspects, such as the intertwining of a single party with the state, the system must be deinstitutionalized in order for competitive political party politics to

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[10] Ibid., p. 17.

[11] Ibid., p. 19.

consolidate.[12] Although hegemonic party systems are usually dominated by one or two parties, various secondary and tertiary parties are often present. However, these peripheral parties have traditionally not been afforded the opportunity to compete in fair and equitable competitions for power.[13]

Table 1.1, "Political Party Institutionalization in Latin America," depicts Mainwaring and Scully's placement of the countries in their study within the three categories.

Table 1.1

Political Party Institutionalization in Latin America

Institutionalized	Hegemonic	Inchoate
Costa Rica	Mexico	Brazil
Uruguay		Peru
Chile		Bolivia
Venezuela		

Source: Adapted from Mainwaring and Scully's Table 1.6 and accompanying text classifications. For complete list of countries in study refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 17.

[12] Ibid., p. 20.

[13] Ibid., p. 21.

Where does Panama belong, if at all, in the model? This thesis places Panama within the Mainwaring and Scully categories. Additionally, it assesses the adequacy of the model in explaining political party institutionalization.

D. HYPOTHESIS TESTING MATRIX

Table 1.2, Hypothesis Testing Matrix, depicts the criteria used to develop the level of political party institutionalization. The matrix is derived from Mainwaring and Scully's analytical model of measuring institutionalized political party systems.[14]

[14] Ibid., pp. 1-5.

Table 1.2

Hypothesis Testing Matrix

Case Study	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Panama	Regularity and Patterns of Political Party Competition	Major Political Party Stability	Electoral Process Legitimacy	Political Party Organiza-tion	Level of Political Party Institution-alization

Source: Adapted from Mainwaring and Scully's text classifications. For complete description of study parameters refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 5-15.

The regularity and patterns of political party competition, major political party stability, electoral legitimacy, and political party organization, are used as independent variable determinants to judge the level of political party institutionalization. An institutionalized party system implies party organizations with reasonably stable rules and structures, acceptance of parties and elections as the legitimate institutions that determine who governs, the existence of parties that have somewhat stable roots in society, as well as stability in interparty competition.[15]

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[15] Ibid., p. 1.

Each of these is used in the matrix as an independent variable to assess the level of Panamanian political party institutionalization.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter II focuses on the theory of democratic transition and consolidation. Chapter III analyzes the historical roots of Panama's political parties.

Chapter IV is the most important contribution of this thesis. It presents the measurements of Panama's political party system institutionalization, and compares Panama's party system with that of other Latin American countries. Chapter IV also critiques the capacity of Mainwaring and Scully's model to adequately explain the range of political party system institutionalization, especially in the case of Panama.

Chapter V presents an analysis of the impact of United States foreign policy on Panama's democracy, and Chapter VI concludes with a summary highlighting the main arguments of the thesis.

E. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The United States and Panama have an unusual international relationship due to the history of development, geography, economics and politics the two countries have shared throughout the twentieth century. This is a complex relationship consisting of multiple actors played out on an

international stage. However, there are few national interests more consequential to Panamanians than the consolidation of their fledgling democracy and U.S. influence in Panamanian affairs. Political parties, the interests they represent, and the patterns of United States foreign policy have, historically, significantly affected Panamanian politics.

Giovanni Sartori has emphasized that political parties function as transmission mediums for demands from society to political society, or, the state.[16] This is seconded by Mainwaring and Scully in the development of their model. Indeed, even when elections are beset with corruption, the party system is weak or eroding, where campaigns are personalistic, or other factors have eaten away at the fundamental soundness of the process, elections are still largely organized around competing parties.[17] Candidates and the rules may vary. However, one fundamental reality remains: parties are an essential link between the public and government.

This thesis investigates that relationship, the level of

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[16] Giovanni Sartori, Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis (Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. ix.

[17] Mainwaring and Scully, p. 2.

political party system institutionalization in Panama, and some of the shortcomings in the literature dealing with advancing Latin American democracies.

II. REVIEW OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND CONSOLIDATION LITERATURE

As noted in the introduction, Panama's political system has a history of *personalismo*, or dominance of an individual (often a charismatic personality).[18] This thesis investigates Panama's underlying political party system. To what extent does that system serve as a counter-balance to the personalization of politics, or *personalismo*? To what extent does that system facilitate the process of democratic transition and ultimately, democratic consolidation?

Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully maintain that the level of political party institutionalization affects the process of democratic consolidation within a state. Specifically, the higher the level of institutionalization, the greater the likelihood that system will experience full democratic consolidation. In contrast, the lower the level of institutionalization, the more that system will hinder democratic consolidation.[19] In a similar argument, David Pion-Berlin posits that the democratic institutions of state, (such as governmental agencies, institutional arrangements,

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[18] Ernest E. Rossi, and Jack C. Plano, Latin America: A Political Dictionary (ABC-CLIO, 1992), p. 59.

[19] Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 1.

and political interchanges) enable or constrain democratic consolidation.[20]

Multiple factors affect the form and process of democracy and democratic consolidation in any country. This chapter analyzes some of those significant factors.

A. DEMOCRACY

There are many (notional as well as evidentiary, or empirical) definitions of democracy in the literature. Robert Dahl, in his seminal work on the subject, suggests a list of nine institutional guarantees that governments (or 'polyarchies' as Dahl calls them) must, at a minimum, allow its citizens, in order to be characterized as democratic. Dahl's list of conditions are shown in Table 2.1, "Requirements for Democracy among a Large Number of People."

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[20] David Pion-Berlin, Through Corridors of Power: Institutions of Civil-Military Relations in Argentina (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), pp. 1-15.

Table 2.1

Requirements for Democracy among a Large Number of People

Required Conditions	Freedom to form and join organizations
	Freedom of expression
	Right to vote
	Eligibility for public office
	Right of political leaders to compete for support
	Right of political leaders to compete for votes
	Alternative sources of information
	Free and fair elections
	Institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference

Source: Adapted from Table 1.1, Robert Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 4-5

An examination of Table 2.1 reveals the range and depth that Dahl considers the core of democratic states. Dahl points out the enormous historical variation to which the institutional conditions have been openly available, publicly employed, and fully guaranteed to "at least some members of the political system who wish to contest . . . the

government."[21] Furthermore, Dahl predicates his guarantees on the assumptions that citizens must have unimpaired opportunities to

> formulate their preferences, signify their preferences to their fellow citizens and the government by individual and collective action, and have their preferences weighed equally in the conduct of the government, that is, weighted with no discrimination because of the content or source of the preference.[22]

Any infringement upon alternative sources of information, free and fair elections, and institutions which make the governments' policies, affects the nature of the stateness of that government.[23]

Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner note that historically, there has been a growing gap between constitutional form and political reality of rights and freedoms in countries that profess to be democratic. One of the most striking trends in the 1990s has been the increasing proportion of constitutionally formal democracies which, in their actual

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[21] Robert Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (Yale University Press, 1971), p. 4.

[22] Ibid., p. 2.

[23] 'Stateness' refers to the degree which a body of people are politically organized, usually occupying a definite territory; especially one that is sovereign. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (G. & C. Merriam Company, 1979), p. 1127.

behavior, do not routinely employ full democratic principles.[24]

Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl stress that there is no single form of democracy, and that Americans should be careful not to identify the concept of democracy too closely with their own institutions. Democracies differ immensely in the degree to which the state encourages consensus versus competition, shared power versus majoritarian rule, and public authority versus private action.[25]

Schmitter and Karl also point out that for the process of democracy to work properly, the patterns that determine the methods of access to principal public offices must be "habitually known, practiced, and accepted by most."[26] Essentially, the political party system must be institutionalized.

Robert Putnam emphasizes the socioeconomic and sociocultural factors present in a democracy in his long-term study of Italian semi-autonomous regional governments. Putnam's analysis is an attempt to answer the enduring

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[24] Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds., The Global Resurgence of Democracy (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. x.

[25] Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl, "What Democracy is . . . and Is Not", in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds., The Global Resurgence of Democracy (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 51.

[26] Ibid., p. 50.

question of whether or not formal institutions influence the practice of politics and government.[27]

For example, if a polity transplants or imports a democratic institution into its country, will that society grow and flourish as a democracy? Or does the development of the institution depend on economic, cultural, and historical conditions? Putnam's work stresses the importance of economic, cultural, and historical influences functioning within states.[28]

Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset define democracy in terms slightly different than Dahl in their multi-country study of democracy in developing countries:

> democracy denotes . . . a system of government that meets three essential conditions: meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force; highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair elections, such that no major (adult) social group is excluded; and a level of civil and political liberties - freedoms of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations-sufficient to ensure

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[27] Robert D. Putnam, Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy (Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 10-15.

[28] Ibid., pp. 15-20.

> the integrity of political competition and participation.[29]

Implicit in Diamond, Linz, and Lipset's definition is the notion that rulers will be held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens and their representatives, whether the representatives symbolize political, economic, legal, or cultural interests.

This thesis is a case study of Panamanian political party system institutionalization. It examines Schmitter and Karl's argument that the political party system must be habitually known, practiced, and accepted by most citizens for the process of democracy to work properly, and explores the depth of and patterns in the political party process.

B. CLASSIFYING REGIMES

For the purposes of classifying contemporary Latin American regimes, Larry Diamond uses an adaptation of Freedom House's annual ratings of political rights and civil liberties.[30] Freedom House's rating of political rights is a

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[29] As quoted in Larry Diamond, "Democracy in Latin America: Degree, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation," in Tom Farer, ed., Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 55.

[30] Larry Diamond, "Democracy in Latin America: Degree, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation," in Tom Farer, ed., Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 57.

measure of the degree to which individuals are allowed to participate freely in the making of policies and the selection of key policy makers. Political rights include the right of all adults to vote and compete for public office through free and fair elections and alternative political parties, and the ability of elected representatives to have a decisive vote on policies.[31]

Freedom House's rating of civil liberties is a measure of the degree to which civil liberties are allowed, including: the freedom to develop views, institutions, and personal autonomy apart from the state; the freedoms of religion, expression, information, assembly, organization; the freedom from torture and terror; and the right of due process and equality under the law.[32]

In utilizing Freedom House's annual ratings of political rights and civil liberties to assist in regime classification, Larry Diamond emphasizes two important notions. First, Diamond reiterates that any political democracy classification scheme, discreet by definition, will lose some descriptive power because the variable of description (democracy), is in essence continuous. Second, Diamond emphasizes that his purpose in classifying democracy according to typology, level of political rights, and civil

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[31] Ibid., p. 55.

[32] Ibid., p. 56.

liberties is not to claim a superior classification scheme. Diamond's primary purpose is to underscore the importance of making careful, empirical distinctions between actual levels of democracy by looking beyond the formal constitutional structure of regimes.[33]

Using a minimalist definition, informed political observers can apply procedural conditions of democracy to existing world political systems and consistently characterize those systems as clearly democratic, clearly not democratic, or falling somewhere in between. With minor exceptions, political observers will most often characterize diverse political systems in the same manner.[34]

Any classification system of political regimes will never perfectly fit the innumerable variations and types of political regimes which have historically evolved. Often, the political systems cannot be clearly categorized; they may be ambiguous, borderline, or contain some degree of several different systems.

Free, fair and open elections are the inescapable essence of democracy. To what extent do they apply to Panama? Even though a formal democratic constitution and structure was in place in Panama throughout much of the

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[33] Ibid., p. 58.

[34] Samuel Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century (University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), p. 8.

period from 1968 to 1989, in practice actual democracy was severely curtailed throughout the period, replaced instead by militaristic praetorianism and dictatorship.

C. TRANSITION

In The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century, Samuel Huntington contains an excellent treatise on different types of regime changes.[35] He refers to them broadly as transformation, replacement, transplacement, and intervention. Huntington describes transformation as elites in power taking the lead in bringing about democracy; replacement as opposition groups combining to force the non-democratic government out of power; transplacement as a joint action by the ruling government and opposition groups moving to a democratic form of government; and intervention as violent external intervention to instill democratic processes.

According to Hungtington, only six of the 35 countries he groups as part of the 'third wave' were initiated as a result of replacement. Only two of 35 were initiated as a result of intervention: Panama and Grenada, both brought about by the United States.[36] Today, a case could be made

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[35] Ibid., pp. 109-112.

[36] Ibid., pp. 164, 207.

that Haiti belongs among the group of externally initiated intervention. The remaining 27 government changes could be classified as either a transformation or a transplacement.[37]

Why is the type of regime change important? First, the type of transition affects the prospects for democratic consolidation in a given country. Second, the case of external intervention highlights the lack of domestic actors able to facilitate or initiate the process of democratic transition.

D. CONSOLIDATION

Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan present a theoretical model of consolidated democracy which identifies five principal arenas of a consolidated democracy: civil society, political society, rule of law, state apparatus, and economic society.[38] The five major areas are organized around primary organizing principles which are inter-related and supportive of each main arena.

Linz and Stepan further categorize how far a given country has gone toward completing a democratic transition by applying a definitional standard which says,

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[37] See Appendix A, Third Wave Regime Transitions, for a complete list of Huntington's third wave transitions.

[38] Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 1-15.

> a democratic transition is complete when sufficient agreement has been reached about political procedures to produce an elected government, when a government comes to power that is the direct result of a free and popular vote, when this government *de facto* has the authority to generate new policies, and when the executive, legislative and judicial power generated by the new democracy does not have to share power with other bodies *de jure*.[39]

Linz and Stepan emphasize the differences between liberalization and democratization as a part of the consolidation process. Liberalization may entail a mix of policy and social changes, such as less censorship of the media or relaxing of other restrictive practices, whereas democratization incorporates liberalization, going beyond its reforms in specifically political areas.

For example, democratization requires the open contestation of the right to win control of the government, which in turn requires free competitive elections.[40] And, as in the Dahl explanation above, if infringement exists in the open contestation of the right to win control of the government, then the freedoms that are vital to the democratic consolidation of the government are affected.

To achieve a consolidated democracy, the functional conditions within the five supporting arenas of Linz and

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[39] Ibid., p. 3.

[40] Ibid., p. 4.

Stepan's model must not only coexist, but provide primary and secondary support roles.[41] In essence, the arenas must be mutually reinforcing. Any one of the arenas may significantly degrade the functioning of the state and the other arenas, if that particular arena is extensively constricted or considerably underdeveloped, for whatever reason. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the impact of the arenas on each other as well as the whole.

As a precondition to the existence and interaction of the five supporting arenas, Linz and Stepan maintain that a state must first exist. They reason that as democracy is a form of governance of a state, "no modern polity can become democratically consolidated unless it is first a state."[42] In addition, if large groups of individuals in a territory want to create or join a different state, they pose a fundamental threat, and can present insurmountable problems.[43]

Linz also maintains that democratic consolidation is typically a consequence of economic development, transformations of class structure, and increased education, which either increase a regime's legitimacy and efficacy or

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[41] Ibid., p. 7.

[42] Ibid., p. 7.

[43] Ibid., p. 7.

act to undermine it.[44] Linz's model of democratic crisis, breakdown, and reequilibration is probabilistic in nature as opposed to deterministic. It emphasizes the strategic behavior of internal political actors within the country and historical setting, leading to an observed sequence of events.[45] For Linz, virtually all democratic processes are driven primarily by internal factors, although external factors may influence outcomes at critical times.

Alfred Stepan posits eight paths toward redemocratization. He agrees with Linz that the overwhelming majority of redemocratization cases have been and will continue to be ones in which domestic forces rather than external military forces play the key role, though international and economic forces play an important role.[46]

Stepan divides his eight paths into two general categories each of which is subdivided into four paths. In the first category, the termination of authoritarian regimes

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[44] Juan Linz, Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration: The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes (John Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 5-15.

[45] Adam Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy," in Guillermo O'Donnell, et al, eds., Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives (John Hopkins University Press, 1991), p., 47.

[46] Alfred Stepan, "Paths toward Redemocratization: Theoretical and Comparative Considerations," in Guillermo O'Donnell, et al, eds., Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives (John Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp., 64-65.

and the initiation of democratic transition is accomplished by those who hold the authoritarian power (transition 'from above'). In the second general category, opposition forces play the major role in terminating the authoritarian regime and in setting a framework for democratic transition (transition 'from below').[47]

In contrast to Linz's assertion that economic development plays an integral part in democratic consolidation, Javier Martinez and Alvaro Diaz contend that it is a fallacy to categorically link democratic consolidation to economic transformation.[48] Rather, they argue that it is more important to analyze the political elites. It is only this group that collectively retains the knowledge and has the ability to use the institutional mechanisms put in place by authoritarian regimes to perpetuate their rule.

Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley also view political elites as the primary force behind democratic consolidation. A key criterion to the long-term stability and survival of a democratic regime for Burton, Gunther and Higley is

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[47] Ibid., p. 66.

[48] Javier Martinez and Alvaro Diaz, Chile: The Great Transformation (Brookings Institute, 1996), p., 3.

> the establishment of substantial consensus among elites concerning rules of the democratic political game and the worth of democratic institutions . . . . We regard the establishment of this elite procedural consensus and outlook as the central element in the consolidation of new democratic regimes.[49]

Burton, Gunther, and Higley also downplay economic and developmental factors in democratic consolidation. They maintain that too often, democracy is little more than a facade behind which the economic elites dominate and exploit the impoverished masses.[50] For Burton, Gunther and Higley, consolidated democracies must encompass specific elite and mass features. Elite groups and factions must share a consensus of political conduct and value the worth of political institutions, and the masses must participate extensively in elections and other political processes.[51]

Larry Diamond asserts that democratization goes hand in hand with the development of civil society. From Diamond's perspective, civil society is not synonymous with 'society', and does not include all organizations and movements. Instead, civil society is: a set of shared rules;

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[49] Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley, "Elite Transformations and Democratic Regimes" in John Higley and Richard Gunther, eds., Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe (Cambridge University Press, 1992), p., 3.

[50] Ibid., p., 2.

[51] Ibid., p., 4.

pluralistic in its diversity; tolerant of multiple organizations; and representative of the community and individual interests.[52]

As an intermediary entity between the private sphere and the state, civil society excludes principally inward looking group activity (e.g., recreation, entertainment, etc.), and the endeavors of individual businesses.[53] In Diamond's analysis, civil society includes: commercial and productive networks and associations; cultural and communal institutions that defend collective rights, values and beliefs; informational and educational groups; developmental organizations; issue oriented movements; and non-partisan civic groups.[54]

Civil society is concerned with public needs rather than private concerns. The development of democratic attributes such as tolerance, moderation, a willingness to compromise, and a respect for opposing viewpoints is fostered by active associations. Thus, a rich associational life fosters the conditions that allow democracy to flourish.[55]

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[52] Larry Diamond, "Toward Democratic Consolidation", in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds., The Global Resurgence of Democracy (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 227-228.

[53] Ibid., p. 228.

[54] Ibid., p. 229.

[55] Ibid., p. 231.

E. SUMMARY

In brief, democracies vary widely in multiple key aspects of their very existence. Regimes may be parliamentary or presidential, federal or unitary. The citizenry may be afforded extremely high levels of access to power and elections, or they may be afforded low levels of access. Regimes may have an extensive system of federal and judicial checks and balances in place, or have a limited scope of checks and balances. What is preeminently important is the degree to which each of the factors combine together to support democratic consolidation. For, the ultimate goal of democratic initiation in any regime type is the transition to and consolidation of full democracy.[56]

Panama is in the process of democratic consolidation, where the very factors examined above are significant in shaping that consolidation. This thesis focuses on the importance of Panamanian political parties in affecting democratic consolidation. A counter balance to the personalization of the political system, the political party system in Panama can facilitate the process of democratic consolidation. The more developed the Panamanian political

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[56] Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl, "What Democracy is . . . and Is Not", in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds., The Global Resurgence of Democracy (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 60-61.

party system becomes, the greater the likelihood that Panama will experience full democratic consolidation. This thesis empirically analyzes the level of Panama's political party institutionalization, and draws distinction between the formal constitutional structure and the actual level of democracy. In this process, the foundations and historical context of Panamanian political parties is important. Chapter III presents an overview of Panamanian political parties and their historical roots.

III. PANAMANIAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR ROOTS

Panama's economic, military, and political makeup have been dominated by the unique geographic position the country occupies as a land bridge between the continents of North and South America, and as the narrowest passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.[57] This chapter focuses on political factors, and presents a brief overview of Panamanian political parties and their historical roots. From where did Panama's contemporary political parties evolve, and what shape did they take? In order to place this thesis inquiry into historical perspective, it is necessary to have an awareness of the political composition and patterns that have shaped the landscape of Panamanian politics.

A. THE FORMATIVE YEARS

The political factions in Panama at the turn of the 20th century had their roots in the Liberal and Conservative parties that had been active in Colombia since the 1830s. The Conservatives, who in 1899 were in power in Bogota, made

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[57] Bruce W. Watson, and Peter G. Tsouras, eds., Operation Just Cause: The U.S. Intervention in Panama (Westview Press, 1991), p. 4.

numerous demands upon the outlying provinces. Panama disliked the burden of taxation and also doubted that the Conservatives in Bogota could be trusted to continue negotiating treaties involving the future of Panama's lands, resources and ultimately the canal concession.[58] Prior to 1899, Panamanians had engaged in several insurrections of varying intensity with Colombia - in 1831, 1840, and 1855. The uprisings were forcibly put down.

Many Panamanians felt that Colombia was profiting handsomely from the concessions and payments generated as a result of earlier U.S. business arrangements and treaties in Panama. The railroad concession of 1850, for example, generated millions of dollars in payments to Colombia.[59] In 1867, Colombia renegotiated the 1850 agreement to receive a greater share of dividends and concession payments from William Aspinwall's Panama Railroad Company (incorporated in New York), which was doing brisk business in inter-oceanic transit services.[60]

In 1899, civil war broke out between the Liberals and the Conservatives and would last for three years. The Liberals, who had popular backing of the rural and middle

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[58] Michael L. Conniff, Panama and the United States: The Forced Alliance (University of Georgia Press, 1992), p. 58.

[59] Ibid., p. 31.

[60] Ibid., p. 25.

class Panamanians, were the stronger of the forces and were poised for victory on several occasions. The Colombian government, ruled by the Conservatives at the time, requested military assistance from the United States to restore peace. The Colombian government warned foreign consuls it would not be able to guarantee peace and the safety of foreigners.[61]

The United States responded to Colombia's requests for assistance by warning the Liberal generals not to attack key Conservative positions, not to disrupt railroad or mail service, or to engage the terminal cities (Colon and Panama City), in conflict. Faced with the possibility of direct United States military intervention as well as no strategically major targets to confront, the Liberal commanders signed a peace treaty with Colombia on board the battleship, USS Wisconsin, in October, 1902.

The events of the three-year civil war dramatically influenced United States-Panamanian relations. First, the war weakened the Colombian government; second, it exposed Colombia's inability to maintain the peace in Panama; third, it gave rise to near continuous intervention by the United States to prevent rebel victory or secession; and finally it increased pressure for a 'zone of isolation' that could shield the canal from threats of violence.[62]

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[61] Ibid., p. 60.

[62] Ibid., p. 61.

After the United States forced Colombia's hand and allowed a faction of the Conservatives to declare Panamanian independence in 1903, two parallel governments were set up in 1904 - one by the U.S. government (Canal Zone administration) and another by the Panamanian government (to handle the rest of Panama).[63] The two governments maintained headquarters within blocks of each other, located in old Panama City, for several years until canal administration was moved to Quarry Heights.[64]

In December 1903, the Panamanian Junta held elections for a constitutional convention to create a permanent government. In January 1904, a centralized regime with a unicameral legislature and presidentially-appointed provincial governors was established. The assembly elected Manuel Amador as president and organized the assembly into a legislature.[65]

With strong support from the United States, the newly-elected Amador government abolished its restless army in

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[63] See Chapter V of this thesis for a discussion of the treaty which was signed 18 November 1903 by Philippe Bunau-Varilla and John Hay. See also John Major, Prize Possession: The United States and the Panama Canal, 1903-1979 (Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 38-49.

[64] Conniff, p. 72.

[65] Ibid., p. 74.

November of 1904.[66] The national and local police were left to uphold the peace and stability of the fledgling nation. Following approval of the canal treaty, formalizing the dependent relationship to the United States, the conservative dominated Panamanian government perceived little need for conciliatory domestic politics. The United States had installed them into power, supported their mutually beneficial canal policies, and held the ultimate influence of military might at their beckon.[67]

Although President Amador appointed a few prominent Liberals to government positions, by and large the opposition Liberals were excluded from decision making roles. Aggravating the opposition's discontent was Article 136 of the constitution, which authorized United States intervention throughout the national territory to reestablish "public peace and constitutional order in case they were disturbed."[68]

The Liberals viewed the article as an attempt to eliminate them from participation in the political process, while perpetuating Conservative rule. Thus, Panamanian political parties were structurally factionalized from their

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[66] Carlos Guevara Mann, Panamanian Militarism: A Historical Interpretation (Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1996), p. 18.

[67] Ibid., p. 50.

[68] Ibid., p. 51.

infancy into two power-contending groups.[69]

Conservatives, who controlled the government from independence until the early 1920s, regularly contended with the Liberals for elective office. When the Liberals, owing to a large popular base, threatened to win in the June 1906 congressional and municipal elections, the United States stationed gunboats in the port of Panama to ensure a Conservative victory. The Conservatives won the election, but as Conniff notes,

> . . . violence ensued leading to several deaths and charges of fraud and intervention . . . [and] the Liberals began to speak openly of executing a revolt against the Amador presidency and Conservative regime.[70]

Later in 1906, United States Secretary of War William H. Taft wrote:

> It has been necessary . . . for the U.S. government to . . . advise all political parties in the Republic of Panama that in order to avoid obstruction to the building of the canal, the United States will not permit revolutions in that republic.[71]

Therefore, maintaining the peace would become a high

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[69] Ibid., p. 52. More details of the role of U.S. foreign policy and its impact on Panama's political system institutionalization are presented in Chapter V of this thesis.

[70] Conniff, p. 76.

[71] Conniff, p. 74.

priority for U.S. troops in Panama in order to maintain the security and ongoing construction of the canal project. The troops would repeatedly interfere in the Panamanian electoral process in the early 1900s.

Whenever contending groups feared their political fortunes were in decline, they solicited mediation by U.S. representatives. This accounts, in part, for the oft-repeated requests for U.S. supervision of Panamanian elections by both Liberals and Conservatives.[72]

By the mid-1920s, the Conservatives had almost disappeared entirely from Panamanian politics. Taking their place, the Partido Libertad Nacional (PLN), led by Belisario Porras, gained political supremacy by building a broad-based multiracial coalition of former liberal and conservative followers. The fledgling Communist party (1925) and Socialist party (1933) also appeared at this time as well as several other small and often short-lived parties led by members of the business and political elite.[73]

Panama's social structures were quite different from those in most Latin American countries. Even in these early times, it is apparent that an old oligarchy in the traditional sense was not present in Panama. In Colombia as

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[72] Mann, p. 55.

[73] Ronald H. McDonald and J. Mark Ruhl, Party Politics and Elections in Latin America (Westview Press, 1989), p. 240.

well as other parts of Latin America, the Conservatives were associated with a landed aristocracy and strong church ties. However, in Panama the conservatives were neither landed aristocracy nor tied to the church.

Panama's natural geographic appeal as an international trade and transit point had instead produced an urban commercial elite and an open secular society traditionally associated with liberal values.[74] In the 1970s Omar Torrijos said, "I did not have to deal . . . with a 400-year old oligarchy . . . . Here the roots are more superficial."[75]

Instead, roughly two sets of elites emerged from the early Conservatives and Liberals ties. The first was of older lineage, tended to be white, Catholic and conservative in social and political preferences, and was oriented towards the land and its products. The second arose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and was of newer families, often non religious or Jewish, of mixed racial and business backgrounds, and more cosmopolitan in their outlook. Their interests centered around trade, services, and the canal as the natural source of wealth.[76]

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[74] McDonald and Ruhl, p. 240.

[75] Conniff, p. 81.

[76] Ibid., p. 81.

B. THE MIDDLE YEARS

In the 1930s a political group called Accion Comunal, dedicated to Panamanian nationalist policies, came to the forefront on the political stage. Accion Comunal was successful in arousing public nationalist opinion against the United States, heightening Panamanian's awareness of perceived economic and sovereign exploitation suffered at the hands of the United States.

Two brothers, Harmodio and Arnulfo Arias, who were leaders in the Accion Comunal group dominated Panamanian politics in the 1930s and 1940s, and into the second half of the century. They significantly influenced relations with the United States throughout the next 50 years. From a rural middle-class background in the interior of the country, the Arias brothers both received advanced degree opportunities abroad, Harmodio in law and economics in England and Arnulfo in medicine in the United States.[77]

Harmodio and Arnulfo, between them, were elected to the presidency four times between 1932 and 1968, Harmodio once and Arnulfo on three occasions. Only Harmodio fulfilled his full term without being turned out of office prematurely. After serving as a diplomatic representative abroad from 1932 to 1936, Arnulfo returned to Panama, and established the Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR). Arnulfo used the PNR

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[77] Ibid., p. 89.

as a vehicle to the presidency in the 1940 elections, but was deposed in October 1941. Arnulfo would subsequently be deposed from the elected presidency again in May 1951, and also in October 1968.[78] Arnulfo ran for president once more (in 1984) and in completely fair elections would probably have won.

Undeniably, political parties played a vital role in the Panamanian political landscape, shaping the political leaders and providing the means through which they were supported for political office. The reasonably unclouded election procedures in 1968 and the fact that Marco Robles (and his administration) peacefully vacated office upon defeat, was a high point in Panama's political arena.[79]

Only eleven days after taking office, Arnulfo was overthrown by a junta led by Omar Torrijos and Boris Martinez. Arnulfo's overthrow on 11 October 1968, proved to be a turning point in Panamanian history, ushering in a twenty-one year period of de facto military and strongman rule.

Presidential rule by the military in Panama had an earlier precedent, but for a shorter time period. The election of Jose Antonio Remon as president in 1952 began

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[78] Luis E. Murillo, The Noriega Mess: The Drugs, The Canal, and Why America Invaded (Video Books, 1995), pp., 915-916.

[79] Lawrence O. Ealy, Yanqui Politics and the Isthmian Canal (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), p. 137.

such a period, a decisive point in Panamanian politics. Remon's presidency, October 1952 to January 1955, marked the first time in Panama that the head of national police forces and the military directly occupied the presidential seat. Remon resigned from the military to run for the presidency, but retained the power of the position through his strong influence.[80]

Remon, a career police officer trained at Mexico's military academy, had been temporarily sidetracked by the Arias brothers during the 1930s. In 1940, Remon gained reappointment to the national police force, rising through the ranks to become its head in 1947.[81] He used his position to consolidate support as well as extend his influence in business and political circles. After Remon's violent death at the hands of armed gunmen on 2 January 1955, a succession of presidents occupied the presidency until 11 October 1968 when Arnulfo Arias was overthrown by a junta led by Torrijos and Martinez.[82]

Omar Torrijos came to power in February of 1969, ousting Boris Martinez, his accomplice in the October 1968 coup that toppled Arnulfo Arias. Immediately following the 1968 coup,

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[80] Conniff, pp. 108-109.

[81] Ibid., p. 106.

[82] See Appendix A, Presidents of Panama: 1940-1998, for a complete list of individual Panamanian Presidents.

the National Guard suspended the 1946 constitution, dissolved the National Assembly, censored the press, and expropriated opposition media facilities (among them the Editora Panama America, publisher of three major dailies, owned by the Arias family).[83] Torrijos became an authoritarian, populist, and personalistic leader until his death in July 1981.[84] His regime was marked by toleration of official corruption, failure to apply effective taxation, and a policy of excessive involvement in the state economy.

Although Torrijos attempted to appeal to the populist and nationalist sectors (responsive to middle and lower class Panamanians), his actions belied the reality that his regime was primarily responsible to the National Guard and general staff.[85] He understood well the political power he wielded and his continued existence were products of armed force. In an early coup attempt against Torrijos, he was assisted in retaining power by Manuel Noriega. Noriega would be rewarded later for his loyalty to Torrijos by promotion and transfer as commander of the Guard's powerful intelligence division.

It was during the later years of Torrijos' reign that the Partido Revolucionario Democratico (PRD) was founded.

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[83] Mann, p. 143.

[84] Ibid., p. 114.

[85] Ibid., p. 115.

Conceived as the political wing of the National Guard, it incorporated labor interests, business organizations, students, women and a multitude of other 'fronts' in an effort to counter dissidence that was rising in the general population and in business and private sectors.[86]

Later, the PRD became the mandatory political party for all public servants, each of whom was required to profess allegiance to PRD social, economic, and nationalistic goals. However, in a Gallup poll conducted in July 1982, the PRD registered only 26 percent of support among the Panamanians questioned.[87]

The demise of Torrijos saw Panama more politically divided, socially distraught, and morally corrupted than when he took over.[88] Moreover, his untimely death 31 July 1981, opened the struggle for power succession within the National Guard.[89]

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[86] Ibid., p. 155.

[87] Murillo, p. 333.

[88] Mann, p. 156.

[89] Richard M. Koster and Guillermo Sanchez, In the Time of the Tyrants: Panama 1968-1990 (W. W. Norton and Company, 1990), pp., 235-239.

C. THE LATER YEARS

Political and forceful behind-the-scenes maneuvering after Torrijos' death allowed Manuel Noriega to assume control of the National Guard and declare himself supreme Panamanian leader in August of 1983. Obsessed with overthrowing the leftist-leaning Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the Reagan administration viewed Panama as strategically important for U.S. efforts to foment rebellion among groups opposed to the Sandinistas.[90] Therefore, the U.S. government was willing to ignore increasing political, human rights, legal, and constitutional violations and atrocities committed by operatives of Noriega, the National Guard, and the PRD.[91]

Other U.S. interests in Panama were perceived to be secure under Noriega. They included the Panama Canal, drug interdiction, operation of the trans-isthmian oil pipeline, and the use of Panamanian maritime registry as a registry of convenience for a majority of the U.S. merchant marine fleet.[92]

During this time, Noriega continuously used the Partido Revolucionario Democratico (PRD) as a political front for

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[90] Mann, p. 166.

[91] Koster and Sanchez, pp., 285-305.

[92] Mann, p. 167.

accomplishing his wishes.[93] For example, in January 1984, when the PRD's General Secretary, Jorge Abadia, announced Nicolas Barletta as the 'consensus candidate' for the upcoming election, there was considerable disputation, even among the ruling directorate of the party. Barletta was not even a member of the PRD. However, Noriega liked Barletta, and knew that Barletta had been a student of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz at the University of Chicago.[94]

Noriega also provided clandestine help and intelligence support to the U.S. military and intelligence agencies. For Noriega's support, Panama was handsomely remunerated. Economic and military aid from the United States burgeoned during the 1980s. From October 1981 to July 1987 military aid alone averaged $7.4 million annually, a dramatic increase over the $2.0 million annually during the Torrijos years. Additionally, millions of dollars in loan guarantees were made available to the regime, as well as $63.2 million in Security Supporting Assistance funds.[95] In political arenas, such as Panama's 1984 presidential election, the United States supported the activities of Noriega.

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[93] Koster and Sanchez, pp. 300-305.

[94] Murillo, pp. 343-345.

[95] Mann, p. 168.

The U.S. administration endorsed Panama's overwhelmingly fraudulent May 1984 election, even before the votes were counted. In April 1984, Sherman Hinson of the U.S. Department of State, announced that the United States would not be sending election observers to Panama, as the State Department was sure the electoral process would be fair, honest, and pure. Ironically, five days after Hinson's announcement and ten days prior to election day, the Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) took over the central computing center of the electoral tribunal and placed all its members under arrest. The PDF then used the computing center as a hub to ensure the victory of PRD candidates and other Noriega cronies throughout the country.[96]

After the rigged 1984 election, designed to assure continuation of Noriega's dictatorship, Nicolas Barletta was installed as President. U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz attended the inauguration saying,

> What a great pleasure it has been for me personally to be a witness at the inauguration of President Barletta . . . . As far as the United States is concerned, we look forward to working closely with the Government of Panama . . . . [97]

However, no amount of support by the United States could continue to cover up the lack of political legitimacy of and

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[96] Koster and Sanchez, p. 305.

[97] Mann, p. 168.

popular support for Noriega's dictatorship. In June 1987, enormous public unrest (the largest since 1968) culminated in public protests. The protests were met with violent beatings, recriminations, and other massive human rights abuses. The popular protests gave rise to a political and economic situation commonly referred to as 'the crisis.'[98]

The political, economic, and governmental situation in Panama continued to deteriorate, to the point that it became an embarrassment and a potential threat to the interests of the United States. As discussed later, the administration of U.S. President George Bush ultimately decided to use armed force to remove Noriega from power and destroy the Panamanian Defense Forces.

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[98] Ibid., p. 169.

IV. PANAMANIAN POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION

A. THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTIES

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the level of political party institutionalization in Panama. As Giovanni Sartori succinctly states in his excellent book on parties and party systems,

> Parties are *the* central intermediate and intermediary structure between society and government. Furthermore, insofar as they are a system, parties interact and such interactions can be viewed as mechanical propensities, as structures of rewards and opportunities that go a long way toward explaining the different performances of different types of party polities.[99]

Furthermore, Sartori emphasizes that party politics have as their basis associations and alliances acting together for the responsible execution of government roles. This is seconded by Mainwaring and Scully in the development of their fourth overall theme, the variance of democratic politics within a state.

As pointed out in the introduction to this thesis, even when elections are beset with corruption, the party system is

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[99] Giovanni Sartori, Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis (Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. ix.

weak or eroding, campaigns are personalistic, or other factors have eaten away at the fundamental soundness of the process, elections are still largely organized around competing parties.[100] Candidates and the rules may vary. However, one fundamental reality remains: parties are an essential link between the public and all aspects of the government.

Their roles include: first, parties serve as a channel of expression for the group of people the party represents. In other words, parties act as the medium through which the populace voices concerns, desires, and priorities concerning public and private issues to those holding office.[101] Second, parties are expressive in nature, backed by the transmitted demands and pressures of those whom the parties represent. If parties are wrongly considered simply a means to communicate, then by inference they could be replaced by opinion polls, surveys, or another information gathering technique.[102] Third, parties aggregate interests of the represented, intentionally (as well as unintentionally by

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[100] Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 2.

[101] Sartori, pp. 26-27.

[102] Ibid., p. 28.

their very existence), for ease of representation.[103]

Therefore, if a fundamental link between society and the government is a party or party system, an obvious question arises as to the relative importance of studying parties comparatively across countries. That is to say, at first look, one might think the study of party systems is important in a country with a long tradition of party politics. After all, it is in a country with a firmly instituted political system that more representation takes place. In a country with a less institutionalized party system, not much happens by and through parties.

Mainwaring and Scully argue though that the critical difference between political systems in Latin America is whether or not the political party systems have become institutionalized. They maintain that whether the system is institutionalized makes a distinct and important difference in the process of democratic consolidation.[104] It is within this framework, and utilizing Mainwaring and Scully's conceptual tools, that this thesis analyzes the development of Panamanian political parties.

B. CONCEPTUAL TOOLS

As an analytical tool, this chapter uses the model of

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[103] Ibid., p. 56.

[104] Mainwaring and Scully, p. 1

political party institutionalization developed by Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully.[105] The chapter examines the development and history of Panama's political parties. The analysis shows, interestingly, that party politics in Panama since the U.S. invasion of 1989, are remarkably similar to those prior to the invasion.

For example, the legislative volatility was 34 percent measured from the 1960 to 1964 elections, and 37 percent from 1989 to 1994, as shown on page 67 in a comparison of Panamanian electoral volatility, 1960-1994. During the same time periods, presidential volatility was 15 and 20 percent respectively, shown also on page 67.

Additionally, there were 5.2 effective political parties in 1960, based on legislative elections, while in 1994, there were 4.4 effective parties, as shown on page 69 in a comparison of effective number of Panamanian political parties, 1960-1994. These are some of the results of investigation into this subject.

Mainwaring and Scully have five principal themes within which the overall organization and importance of party systems are analyzed. First, they analyze parties and their roles in shaping how democracies function. Second, they argue the critical differences among party systems in Latin America are whether or not the systems have become

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[105] Ibid., pp. 1-35.

institutionalized. Third, they believe that there exist marked differences in the degree of institutionalization in the systems. Fourth, they maintain that whether the system is institutionalized affects the functioning of the democratic politics within a state. And fifth, Mainwaring and Scully discuss the variations in the number of parties represented in a state as well as the ideological differences among them.[106]

1. The Idea of Institutionalized Party Systems

An unpretentious definition of political parties is as follows:

> A party is any political group that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections, candidates for public office.[107]

A party system on the other-hand, is defined by Mainwaring and Scully as "the set of patterned interactions in the competition among parties."[108] This suggests that the rules and patterns of political interaction constitute a system.

If the distinct parts of a political system remain

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[106] Ibid., p. 1.

[107] Sartori, p. 64.

[108] Mainwaring and Scully, p. 4.

stable and coherent for long periods of time compared to systems in other states, then the systems can be categorized as more stable than one in which the parts were volatile. Similarly, if a dramatic fluctuation in the number of parts occurs, then it is clear that another system has supplanted the original one, either by transformation, substitution, or replacement.[109]

Likewise, institutionalization of the party system refers to a process by which a practice or organization becomes widely known and well established.[110] Mainwaring and Scully identify four conditions for the institutionalization of a democratic party system. First, and most important, the patterns of party competition must be evident with some degree of regularity. For example, an environment where major parties appear and then disappear in a short time frame with no apparent major forces would not be highly institutionalized. Second, the major parties must have fairly stable roots in society; otherwise, the populace would not be able to manifest their preferences over time, influencing the manner in which the parties shaped their agendas. Third, in an institutionalized party system, the major political actors accord legitimacy to the electoral

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[109] As described in Chapter II.

[110] Mainwaring and Scully, p. 4.

process and to the parties themselves. The actors may be political elites, business cooperatives, or labor organizations; what is important, is that they view the party system as key in determining access to representative power. Fourth, the party organizations matter in an institutionalized party system. That is, the party organizations are not subjugated to the interests of aspiring leaders; they attain a separate status and value of their own. It is a sign of greater institutionalization of the party structures if the structures are territorially comprehensive, standardized, and have assets of their own to affect intraparty procedures as well as public campaigns.[111]

Table 4.1, "Party System Institutionalization in Latin America", presents a schematic ranking of the four dimensions, or criteria described above for representative countries in Mainwaring and Scully's study. It should be noted that the rankings are based on Latin American comparisons rather than a global scale. The column on the far right gives an aggregate score for the four criteria and places the countries in relative rank order from highest to lowest total aggregate, signifying Mainwaring and Scully's estimate of the degree or level of political party system institutionalization in each of the countries studied. According to the model, and in Mainwaring and Scully's view,

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[111] Ibid., p. 5.

criteria two, three, and four as well as the aggregate are not precise, but rather an approximation of their overall findings.[112]

Table 4.1

Party System Institutionalization in Latin America

Country	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4 [1]	Aggregate
Costa Rica	2.5 [2]	3.0	3.0	3.0	11.5
Chile	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.0	11.5
Uruguay	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.5	11.5
Venezuela	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.0	10.5
Mexico	1.5	2.5	1.5	3.0	8.5
Bolivia	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	5.0
Brazil	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	5.0
Peru	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5	4.5

Source: Adapted from Mainwaring and Scully Table 1.6. For complete list of countries in study refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 2-8.

Note: [1] Criterion 1 = patterns of party competition; Criterion 2 = party stability; Criterion 3 = electoral legitimacy; Criterion 4 = party organization solidity.
[2] Scale: 3.0 = high; 2.5 = medium high; 2.0 = medium; 1.5 = medium low; 1.0 = low.

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[112] Ibid., p. 16.

2. Institutionalization Measurement

If, as Mainwaring and Scully argue, the degree of institutionalization within a political party system has far-reaching consequences, and the critical differences among political systems in Latin America are whether or not the party systems have become institutionalized, then determining that degree of institutionalization is paramount in classifying the party system. As Mainwaring and Scully maintain, whether or not the system is institutionalized affects the process of democratic consolidation within a state.[113]

Also, as Larry Diamond has asserted, weak political institutions are a key factor in democratic erosion and corrosive to democratic processes.[114] Guillermo O'Donnell argues that the lack of political party institutionalization is one of the factors which keeps democracies at the delegative level instead of fully representative.[115] It is within this context that this chapter analyzes the level of

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[113] Ibid., p. 1.

[114] Larry Diamond, "Democracy in Latin America: Degrees, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation" in Tom Farer, ed., Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 63.

[115] Guillermo O'Donnell, "Delegative Democracy" in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds., The Global Resurgence of Democracy (John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 95.

political party institutionalization in Panama.

Determining the degree of institutionalization is facilitated by examining the four criteria that Mainwaring and Scully posit as the fundamental parts of the system.

The first criterion of institutionalization, that patterns of party competition must be evident with some amount of regularity, lends itself to empirical measurement of past election data. Election results may be quantified by examining the amount and longevity of parties or historical electoral volatility. A strict aggregate of the number of parties present, although reasonable as an investigative tool, does not distinguish between the net change in electoral mobility that takes place between elections.

It is beneficial to know how many parties are present and the durability of the parties, as this allows one more avenue for comparison. To capture the degree to which the parties are either stable or unstable, though, requires an examination of the change that takes place in representative elections between parties.[116] This chapter, presents both variables for analysis.

A relative objective measure of the change in electoral mobility, or volatility, is the net electoral change between

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[116] Stefano Bartolini and Peter Mair, Identity, Competition and Electoral Availability: The Stabilisation of European Electorates 1885-1985 (Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 19.

two consecutive elections. When summed for more than one party or more than two election periods, the net change is an aggregate of the variables reflecting overall electoral change of the parties for the period. The actual mathematical formula from which the index or aggregate is derived is determined by adding the net change in percentage of seats, or votes, gained or lost by each party from one election to the next, and dividing by two. Mathematically, the formula is expressed as:

$$TV = \frac{|PaV| + |PbV| + |PcV| \ldots + |PxV|}{2}$$

where, TV is aggregate volatility, and PaV represents the change, in absolute terms, in the aggregate vote for party {a} between two consecutive elections.[117]

As the formula indicates, the sum of the individual party volatilities is normally divided by two. This is done based on the assumption that accumulated net gains are equal to accumulated net losses in a measuring period. Therefore, the total sum must be divided by two in order to avoid a double-counting of the same voting shifts, i.e., once as a loss and once as a gain. It is by this same principle that differing amounts of parties can be compared to each other from different cases studies. It should be noted, however, that if net gains did not equal net losses or vice versa,

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[117] Ibid., p. 20.

then the index would be slightly off.

An additional clarification is appropriate here. While the measured index is accurate as far as the variables involved, one should not be persuaded that the measurements represent absolute truth. For, as the variables are compared against other time periods, countries, etc., the temptation to uniformly summarize the results in comparative form is high. While TV, or aggregate volatility, is used repeatedly in the literature, the underlying basis of the examination is individual voting patterns of people, and as such, no amount of exhaustive investigation will be absolutely correct.

The calculations are in and of themselves estimates of the trends in voting patterns, and represent an approximation of the variable in question - in this case electoral volatility. The calculations, although accurate to a degree, are not a precise identification of the patterns being measured.[118]

C. ESTABLISHING THE FACTORS

Prior to examining the indicators of volatility, it is necessary to establish two things: first, the time frame studied, and second, the Panamanian political parties in existence during the time period measured. After determining

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[118] A good discussion on the limitations of variable estimation and measurement is found in Bartolini and Mair, pp. 21-22.

the first variable, the number of electoral periods is a resultant, in essence defining a third variable, dependent upon the time frame.

The earliest Mainwaring and Scully aggregate of the investigated electoral volatility case studies is 1970, in two of their twelve cases (Colombia and Costa Rica), with most of the cases beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The latest electoral year their aggregate covers is 1993 (three of the cases), with 3.5 electoral periods as the mean elections per country study.[119]

For the purposes of this study on Panama, the analysis begins in 1960, and terminates with the elections of May 1994. This defines a period of 34 years, encompassing six elections. Although a broader time frame than Mainwaring and Scully examine in their aggregate analysis, it is important to cover a minimum of three electoral periods prior to and after the military reign which lasted from October 1968 to December 1989.[120]

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[119] See Table 1.1 in Mainwaring and Scully.

[120] The military coup of 11 October 1968 orchestrated by Boris Martinez and Omar Torrijos, toppled Arnulfo Arias who had been in office a mere 10 days. He had won the presidency in fair elections running against David Samudio, the hand picked successor of outgoing president, Marcos Aurelio Robles.

1. Electoral Volatility in Panamanian Elections, 1960-1994

Table 4.2, on the next page, presents the electoral volatility of Panamanian elections from 1960 to 1994. The volatility is calculated from Europa World Year Book data, recognized as a reliable source, and calculated as described previously for TV = total volatility. Electoral volatility in conjunction with effective number of political parties, presented in Table 4.3, is a good indicator of the first criterion of institutionalization in Mainwaring and Scully's model, i.e., that patterns of party competition must be evident with some degree of regularity.

Table 4.2

Panamanian Electoral Volatility, 1960-1994

	Election Type	
	Legislative	Presidential
Time Span	Volatility (in percent)	Volatility (in percent)
1960-64	34	15
1964-68	-*	10
1968-84	14	8
1984-89	42	18
1989-94	37	20
Mean Volatility:	32	14
Mean Legislative and Presidential Volatility:		23

Source: Europa World Year Books, 1959 - 1995.
Calculations: Author.

Note: See page 63 for an explanation of how electoral volatility is calculated. My basic beginning point for electoral data was the May 1960 election. Frequent changes in party systems made it difficult at times to assign party affiliation between electoral periods. In the case of minor name changes, parties aligned closely from one electoral period to another were counted representatively as the same party for the purposes of absolute change.

* Unable to find verifiable legislative returns for 1968; the Legislature, or Chamber of Deputies, was suspended from October 1968 to October 1978.

2. Effective Number of Parties and Ideological Polarization

During the same time period covered in Table 4.2, data representing the effective number of parties existent in Panamanian legislative elections is presented in Table 4.3, "Effective Number of Panamanian Parties, 1960-1994". It should be noted that the number of parties is a key element in party politics, affecting a variety of concerns, and in conjunction with electoral volatility is also an indicator of the first criterion of institutionalization in Mainwaring and Scully's model. Additionally, although not developed in this study, the number of effective political parties may be used along with the amount of party and societal polarization as an indicator of the effectiveness of a presidential democracy as well as an indicator of the longevity the democracy might experience.

Table 4.3

Effective Number of Panamanian Political Parties, 1960-1994

(based on legislative elections)

Election	Effective Number of Parties
1960	5.2
1964	6.3
1968	-*
1984	2.0
1989	3.7
1994	4.4
Mean Effective Number of Parties:	4.3

Source: Europa World Year Books, 1959 - 1995.
Calculations: Author.

Note: * Unable to find verifiable legislative returns for 1968 at this time.

The relative ease or difficulty in passing laws, enacting reforms, developing legislative proposals, and a host of other governmental processes can hinge upon whether or not the ruling party has a simple majority, absolute majority, or plurality. In turn, the number of effective parties plays a pivotal role in determining how the majority is split by the very existence of multiple effective parties and then,

ultimately, whether or not coalitions have to be formed for governing.[121]

The measure of effective number of parties presented in Table 4.3 is derived by summing the square of each party's share of seats (in percentage), and dividing 1.0 by the sum. Mathematically, the formula is expressed as:

$$N_s = \frac{1.0}{\sum p_i^2}$$

where N_s is the effective number of parties expressed in seats and p_i is the fractional share of seats of the i-th party.[122] Calculating the effective number of parties in this manner decreases the likelihood of an overstatement of 'relevant' or 'effective' parties, as N_s is measured in a weighted fashion according to the percentage of representation in the legislature.

How do these factors relate to each other, i.e., the amount of polarization as well as electoral volatility and effective number of political parties? For comparison

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[121] Mainwaring and Scully, p. 28.

[122] This is using a derivative of Sartori's typology as modified by Markku Laakso and Rein Taagepera, "The Effective Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to Western Europe," Comparative Political Studies 12, no. 1 (April 1979), pp. 3-27, cited in Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 29.

purposes, it is helpful to place Panama's determinants in perspective with Mainwaring and Scully's observations.

D. ELECTORAL FACTORS COMPARED

Tables 4.4 and 4.5, "Representative Electoral Volatility, Latin America," and "Effective Number of Political Parties, Latin America," show how Panama's electoral volatility and effective number of political parties compare to other countries in Mainwaring and Scully's study.

Table 4.4

Representative Electoral Volatility, Latin America

	Election Type		
Country	Mean Legislative Volatility (in percent)	Mean Presidential Volatility (in percent)	Mean Total Volatility (in percent)
Uruguay	9	9	9
Costa Rica	18	14	16
Chile	16	15	16
Venezuela	18	20	19
Panama	**32**	**14**	**23**
Mexico	22	32	27
Bolivia	33	39	36
Peru	54	54	54
Brazil	41	99	70

Source: Mainwaring and Scully Table 1.1 adapted to include author's Panama calculations. For complete list of countries in study refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 17.

Note: Tenths of percentage points rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 4.5

Effective Number of Political Parties, Latin America

(based on legislative elections)

Country	Number of Elections	Mean Number of Parties (historical)	Mean Number of Parties (latest)
Mexico	2	2.2	2.2
Costa Rica	6	2.4	2.2
Uruguay	3	3.0	3.3
Venezuela	5	3.0	4.5
Peru	4	3.8	5.8
Bolivia	5	4.0	4.7
Panama	**6**	**4.3**	**4.4**
Chile	3	4.7	5.1
Brazil	2	5.7	8.7

Source: Mainwaring and Scully Table 1.7 adapted to include author's Panama calculations. For complete list of countries in study refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 17.

As an indicator of Mainwaring and Scully's first criterion of political party institutionalization, Panama's comparative electoral volatility and effective number of political parties are insightful. In rank order, Panama's electoral

volatility is the sample median of the study population.

However, closer observation reveals that at 23 percent, Panama's electoral volatility is much closer to the top two countries Uruguay (9 percent) and Costa Rica (16 percent), than to the lowest two countries Peru (54 percent) and Brazil (70 percent). Uruguay and Costa Rica's electoral volatility averaged only 10.5 percent lower than Panama's, while Brazil and Peru's electoral volatility averaged 33.5 percent higher than Panama's, a statistically significant difference. Additionally, the mean separation of Panama's electoral volatility from the top four countries is 8.0 percent, while the mean separation from the bottom four countries is 23.5 percent.

Panama's effective number of political parties shows similar insights. When discriminating among the other countries in the study according to historical mean, Panama's effective number of political parties ranks third from last at 4.3 parties. Most telling, perhaps, is when the effective number of political parties are re-ranked according to the latest legislative election. The results appear as shown in Table 4.6, "Latest Effective Number of Political Parties, Latin America".

Table 4.6

Latest Effective Number of Political Parties, Latin America

(based on legislative elections)

Country	Mean Number of Parties (latest)
Mexico	2.2
Costa Rica	2.2
Uruguay	3.3
Panama	**4.4**
Venezuela	4.5
Bolivia	4.7
Peru	5.8
Chile	5.1
Brazil	8.7

Source: Mainwaring and Scully Table 1.7 adapted to include author's Panama calculations. For complete list of countries in study refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 17.

Table 4.6, the most current data and possibly a better indicator of near-term effective political party trends, shows that Panama, although in the top four countries, is closest to the two countries clustered in the middle of the group, Venezuela and Bolivia, with a 0.2 mean arithmetic difference.

E. PARTY LONGEVITY

The ability of political parties to survive and stay viable over a relatively long period of time is a rather good gauge that the observed parties have captured at least some of the long-term loyalties of social groups and the populace in general. Consequently, as Mainwaring and Scully point out, if an institutionalized party system exists, more parties are likely to have longer histories than in cases of less institutionalization.[123] Thus, Mainwaring and Scully use political party age as a measure indicative of their second criterion, i.e., that major parties must have fairly stable roots in society. Table 4.7 shows the age and percentage of the vote in the most recent Panamanian election (1994) that was captured by the parties.

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[123] Mainwaring and Scully, p. 13.

Table 4.7

Legislative Seats (1994) Held by Political Parties in Panama

Party	Year Founded	Age (in years)	Percentage of Seats Held (in percent)
PRD	1979	15	43
PA	1938	56	21
MPE	1991	3	8
MOLIRENA	1982	12	7
PLA	1988	6	6
PRC	1992	2	4
Partido Solidaridad	1993	1	3
Mean Age - all Parties:		14	
Mean Age of Parties holding 10 percent of Legislative Seats (PRD, PA):		35	

Source: Europa World Year Books 1959-1995.
Calculations: Author.

Note: **PRD**-Partido Revolucionario Democratico, **PA**-Partido Arnulfista, **MPE**-Movimiento Papa Egoro, **MOLIRENA**-Movimiento Liberal Republicano Nacionalista, **PLA**-Partido Liberal Autentico, **PRC**-Partido Renovacion Civilista.
Parties holding 1% or less of legislative seats excluded.

Interestingly, only the Partido Arnulfista, which captured 21 percent of the seats, was established prior to the year 1950, which was used as a benchmark by Mainwaring and Scully to

compare party longevity.[124] In addition, the mean age of all parties was only 14 years.

Another benchmark used by Mainwaring and Scully for party longevity purposes was the mean age of parties holding 10 percent of legislative seats.[125] In this category, only two parties held 10 percent or greater of the legislative seats: the Partido Revolucionario Democratico, which gained 43 percent of the vote, and the Partido Arnulfista, which gained 21 percent of the vote. Combined, the two parties represented an average age of 35 years.

1. Party Longevity Compared

While not a clear indicator of whether the major parties have somewhat stable roots in society, there is a strong link to the way people vote over time and the attachment of the political structure to society. In addition, the more citizens are attached to political parties, the more stable the party will become over time.

Mainwaring and Scully reason that the more developed the linkages between long-term interests and political parties are, generally, the more developed the political

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[124] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[125] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

institutionalization becomes.[126] As discussed previously, Mainwaring and Scully use party longevity as an indicator of the second criterion in their model, assessing stable roots of the major political parties. Table 4.8, "Political Age of Parties Holding 10 Percent of Legislature, Latin America", shows how Panamanian party longevity compares to other countries in Mainwaring and Scully's study.

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[126] Ibid., pp. 5, 15.

Table 4.8

Political Age of Parties Holding 10 Percent of Legislature, Latin America

Country	Election Year	Number of Parties	Mean Age of Parties (in years)
Uruguay	1990	3	112
Mexico	1991	2	59
Costa Rica	1990	2	44
Chile	1993	4	37
Panama	**1994**	**2**	**35**
Venezuela	1993	4	33
Peru	1990	4	33
Bolivia	1993	5	20
Brazil	1990	3	12

Source: Mainwaring and Scully Table 1.5 adapted to include author's Panama calculations. For complete list of countries in study refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 17.

Comparing the political age of Panamanian parties holding 10 percent of legislature seats to other Latin American countries, the data clearly show that Panama is not among the leaders in party political age. However, thirty-five years old is very close (within plus or minus two years), to three other countries: Chile, Venezuela, and Peru. Panama's mean age of parties is within nine years of Costa Rica, which has

a mean age of 44 years for the two parties holding 10 percent of the legislative seats. This is significant, in that Chile was once considered a model of democracy, Venezuela has been democratic since 1958, and Costa Rica has been democratic since 1948.

Table 4.9, "Percent of Legislature Seats Held by Parties Founded 1950 or Earlier, Latin America," looks at political party longevity a little differently than Table 4.8. Whereas Table 4.8 compares the number and mean age of parties holding 10 percent of the legislature, Table 4.9 compares the percent of legislature seats held in the most recent election by parties which had been founded prior to or in the year 1950. An arbitrary cutoff, 1950, was the point chosen by Mainwaring and Scully for comparative purposes and maintained for this thesis.[127]

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[127] Ibid., p. 14.

Table 4.9

Percent of Legislature Seats Held by Parties

Founded 1950 or Earlier, Latin America

Country	Election Year	Number of Parties	Percent of Seats
Costa Rica	1990	2	95
Mexico	1991	3	84
Uruguay	1989	2	70
Chile	1993	4	57
Venezuela	1993	4	56
Bolivia	1993	1	40
Peru	1990	1	29
Panama	**1994**	**1**	**21**
Brazil	1990	1	1

Source: Mainwaring and Scully Table 1.4 adapted to include author's Panama calculations. For complete list of countries in study refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 17.

Note: Tenths rounded to the nearest whole number.

Once again, the data reflect that Panama is clearly not among the top countries in comparative political party age. Indeed, when viewed from the perspective of percentage of legislative seats held by parties founded prior to or in 1950, as Table 4.9 does, Panama is the next to last country. However, three items stand out.

First, the data highlight the wide range of longevity represented, from Costa Rica, where two parties founded in 1950 or earlier held 95 percent of the legislature, to Brazil, where one party founded 1950 or earlier held only one percent of the legislature. Second, four of the nine countries represented have only one party which was founded in 1950 or earlier, and six of the nine have only one or two parties founded in 1950 or earlier. And lastly, while the rank order of Table 4.8 and Table 4.9 vary slightly, the same five countries are at the low end of the scale (Panama, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, and Brazil), while the same four countries are at the high end of the scale (Costa Rica, Mexico, Uruguay, and Chile).

F. ELECTORAL LEGITIMACY

Mainwaring and Scully postulate a third criterion that affects political system institutionalization: the level of legitimacy which citizens and organized interests accord political parties and the electoral process.[128] Comprehensive cross-national survey data would be the best way to assess the key aspects of this criterion. Such survey data have not been compiled throughout Latin America, therefore Mainwaring and Scully offer rough estimates for the countries in their study.

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[128] Ibid., p. 29.

Specifically, Mainwaring and Scully feel that parties have been and are crucial in determining who governs in Venezuela, Costa Rica, Chile, Uruguay, and Colombia, and that the major political actors accept that elections determine who governs, though acceptance has perhaps diminished in both Venezuela and Colombia. [129] In Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Brazil, political parties are increasingly becoming accepted as a main route to governing. However, especially in Ecuador and Brazil, the *personalismo*, or the personalization of politics, is such that parties are less likely to be accorded the role of determining who governs. Similarly, parties and elections are less important in determining who governs and less likely to be perceived as a main route to governing in Mexico, Peru, and Paraguay,[130] although improvements have been made recently, most notably in Mexico.

Although not a specific indicator of criterion three in Mainwaring and Scully's model, a broad indicator that may be used as a basis, in part, in assessing criterion three is the political rights and freedoms citizens in a country enjoy. Comparative measures of political rights and freedoms have been assessed and reported on for a number of years by

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[129] Ibid., p. 14.

[130] Ibid., p. 14.

Freedom House, a non-partisan, non-profit organization based in New York.

In Freedom House's most recent *Comparative Measures of Freedom Survey*, as shown in Table 4.10, Panama was assigned a political rights level of two.[131]

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[131] Freedom House, "Table of Independent Countries: Comparative Measures of Freedom: 1996-97" (www.freedomhouse.org/political/frtable1.htm).

Table 4.10

Comparative Measures of Freedom Survey

Country	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Freedom Rating
Costa Rica	1	2	Free
Uruguay	1	2	Free
Chile	2	2	Free
Panama	**2**	**3**	**Free**
Bolivia	2	3	Partly Free
Venezuela	2	3	Partly Free
Brazil	2	4	Partly Free
Mexico	4	3	Partly Free
Peru	4	3	Partly Free

Source: Adapted from Freedom House's Comparative Measures of Freedom Survey. "Table of Independent Countries: Comparative Measures of Freedom: 1996-97" (www.freedomhouse.org/political/frtable1.htm).

Note: Shown in descending order according to assigned Political Rights rating. Scale is from one to seven with one being the highest.

If the populace have the freedom to engage in the political process openly, affecting changes, it follows that they will accord the electoral process and political parties a greater degree of legitimacy than if those political rights and freedoms were denied. Therefore, placed in context with Mainwaring and Scully's other criteria and in comparison with

the other countries in their study, Freedom House's political rights rating may be used as a rather good measure of Mainwaring and Scully's third criterion of institutionalization.

Freedom House's freedom rating of 'Free' for Panama is significant as well. In using the rating as a discriminator in relation to the other countries in Mainwaring and Scully's study, it breaks out Panama above Bolivia, Venezuela, Brazil, Mexico and Peru. In each data set observed to this point, besides the re-ranking of effective number of political parties based on most current legislative election, this is the first time that Panama has broken out in the top four countries, joining Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Chile. Although Chile, Costa Rica and Uruguay each have experienced political difficulties, they are three of the countries in Latin America with the deepest and broadest democratic traditions.

This strongly suggests that Panama's political party institutionalization is not stuck at the 'bottom of the cellar.' Rather, Panama's political party system exhibits institutionalization traits characteristic of the more developed countries.

G. PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

The fourth criterion of institutionalization in Mainwaring and Scully's model is the level of party organization solidity. That is, party organizations are not

subjugated to the interests of aspiring leaders; rather, the parties are capable of attaining separate status and value of their own.[132] As Mainwaring and Scully point out, more research is needed on the internal relationships and machinations within Latin American political parties.[133] However, it is obvious that party organizations in Costa Rica, Chile, Uruguay, Mexico and Venezuela are among the strongest and most institutionalized in Latin America. Party organizations are somewhat weaker in Colombia and Argentina compared to Costa Rica, Chile, Uruguay, Mexico and Venezuela, and even weaker in Bolivia, Brazil and Peru.[134]

Comparing Panama's political party solidity to the other countries in the study is somewhat subjective, but a few characteristics shine through. Party switching is not as prevalent among Panamanian politicians as in Brazil and in Peru. The primary political parties in Panama are not intensely divided into divisions or factions, which seriously erode the strength of the major parties. Additionally, party leaders in Panama do not systematically weaken party

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[132] Mainwaring and Scully, p. 5.

[133] Ibid., p. 16.

[134] Ibid., p. 16.

organization to the detriment of party solidity. More often, most of Panama's political elite have worked to strengthen their parties against threats external to their parties.

H. COMBINED FACTORS AND PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Assessing the factors and data presented above within the framework of Mainwaring and Scully's model, indicates that Panama is past the embryonic level of political party institutionalization, or inchoate stage as Mainwaring and Scully describe it. Table 4.11, "Panamanian Party System Institutionalization in Comparative Perspective", compares the level of party system institutionalization in Panama with eight other Latin American countries, based upon the four criteria in Mainwaring and Scully's model.

Table 4.11

Panamanian Party System Institutionalization

in Comparative Perspective

Country	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion [1] Aggregate
Costa Rica	2.5 [2]	3.0	3.0	3.0	11.5
Chile	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.0	11.5
Uruguay	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.5	11.5
Venezuela	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.0	10.5
Mexico	1.5	2.5	1.5	3.0	8.5
Panama	**2.0**	**1.5**	**2.0**	**2.0**	**7.5**
Bolivia	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	5.0
Brazil	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	5.0
Peru	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5	4.5

Source: Mainwaring and Scully Table 1.6 adapted to include author's Panama estimates. For complete list of countries in study refer to Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 2-8.

Note: [1] Criterion 1 = patterns of party competition; Criterion 2 = party stability; Criterion 3 = electoral legitimacy; Criterion 4 = party organization solidity.
[2] Scale: 3.0 = high; 2.5 = medium high; 2.0 = medium; 1.5 = medium low; 1.0 = low.

Table 4.11 also shows how Panama's party system institutionalization compares to the other countries in Mainwaring and Scully's study. Clearly, Panama falls in the

bottom half of the country group. It does break out, however, as the top of the four lowest countries. Panama's numerical aggregate (7.5), is closer to Mexico's (8.5), which ranks among the top five countries, than to the next closest country Bolivia (5.0) on the low side; and, only by a difference of 1.0 aggregate point compared to a difference of 2.5 aggregate points.

I. COUNTRY POLITICAL GROUPING

The three groups that Mainwaring and Scully describe the countries in their study fall into three broad categories, institutionalized, inchoate, and hegemonic.

Institutionalized group countries are typified by political parties whose share of votes are usually reasonably stable from one election to the next.[135] Characterized in terms of electoral volatility (Table 4.2), party systems in the institutionalized group are the lowest among the study group. The major political parties have moderately strong roots in their respective societies, as well as fairly strong identities which place them as recognizable, finite groups. Political parties are primary actors in the institutionalized group countries, shaping to a large degree the electoral process and determining who governs in the country, not

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[135] Ibid., p. 17.

merely subjugated to the political desires of charismatic leaders.[136]

Inchoate group countries have party systems that are generally weak and often fragmented. The party systems in these countries are neither long-term stable or short-term solid.[137] Electoral volatility is high, and the party roots into their respective societies are weak. In inchoate group countries, various personalities have tended to dominate parties and campaigns historically and in the present.[138]

Hegemonic group countries fall in between the institutionalized and inchoate party system countries in Mainwaring and Scully's model. In the case of Mexico, the dominant one party rule is in the process of evolving from a more authoritarian structure.

However, the process must continue in order for political party system institutionalization to strengthen. In some aspects, such as the intertwining of a single party with the state, the system must be deinstitutionalized in order for competitive political party politics to consolidate.[139] Although the hegemonic party systems are either one or two party centered, a periphery of secondary

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[136] Ibid., p. 17.

[137] Ibid., p. 19.

[138] Ibid., p. 20.

[139] Ibid., p. 20.

and tertiary parties are often present. However, the periphery parties have traditionally not been afforded the opportunity to compete in fair and equitable competitions for power.[140]

1. Panama's Political Grouping: An Analysis

Panama's political party system does not fit into any of the three categories established by Mainwaring and Scully. From the analysis in this chapter, Panama clearly does not belong in the institutionalized category. Costa Rica, Uruguay, Chile, and Venezuela all have political party systems that are more highly institutionalized than that of Panama.

Likewise, Panama does not belong in the inchoate category with such countries as Brazil, Peru and Bolivia. Finally, Panama is definitely not a hegemonic political state as in the case of Mexico or Paraguay. In essence, the model is limited by the number of categories it accommodates. A new category is necessary to accommodate the Panamanian case; therefore, a modification to Mainwaring and Scully's model is presented.

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[140] Ibid., p. 21.

J. MODIFIED COUNTRY POLITICAL GROUPING

On a continuous scale of political grouping, Panama would fall somewhere in the middle. It would be possible to construct such a scale, or one with many more descriptive categories. However, a certain amount of economy in the use of a means to an end, or distillation of key principles, is required in order for a theory to be useful.[141] Accordingly, rather than inventing an entirely new model, or lapsing into the indeterminate, the addition of a fourth category to Mainwaring and Scully's model seems appropriate.

The modified model with a fourth descriptive category, advancing group, appears as shown in Figure 4.1, "Modified Model of Latin America Political Party Institutionalization."

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[141] Mancur Olson's, The Rise and Decline of Nations (Yale University Press, 1982) contains an excellent discussion on the persuasiveness of a theory related to the diversity of phenomena explained. See especially pp. 12-20.

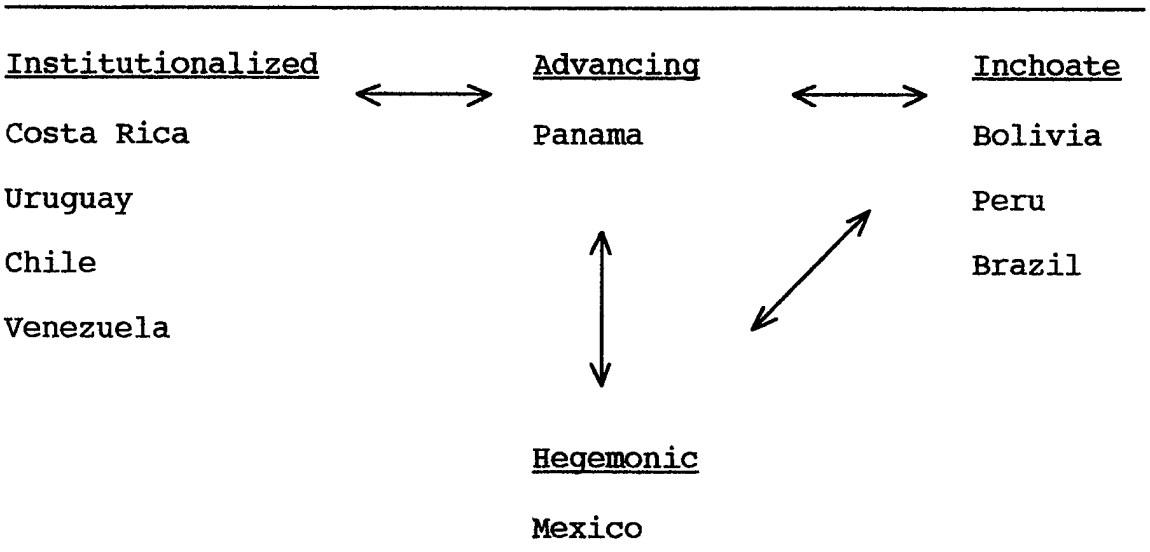

Figure 4.1, Modified Model of Latin America Political Party Institutionalization

Source: Author's modification of Mainwaring and Scully's classifications. See Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 17-23.

The fourth category, the advancing group, is where Panama should be placed. Falling in between inchoate and institutionalized, the advancing group is for precisely the type of political party system exhibited in Panama. Although displaying many of the political party traits of institutionalized systems, the foundations are not as strong as those in institutionalized systems. The political parties have fairly stable roots in society and are indeed more grounded than those in the inchoate group, while a majority of the political actors view parties and the electoral

process as legitimate. Furthermore, in the advancing group, seldom is the party subjugated to the interests of aspiring leaders, and the party has a moderately developed status and views associated with the party.

Also, Figure 4.1 is configured to depict the distinct difference of hegemonic political party systems compared to those in the institutionalized, advancing, and inchoate categories. As previously noted, countries with hegemonic political systems may be highly institutionalized in certain areas, yet inchoate in other areas.

Emphasis must be placed upon the dynamism of the Mainwaring and Scully model, with the ability of countries to move between categories. For example, by Mainwaring and Scully's estimate, Brazil is farther away from having an institutionalized party system now than it was thirty years ago. In contrast, Peru, in the 1980's, witnessed an implosion of political parties which served to move the country farther away from an institutionalized party system.[142] Additionally, in Mexico a process of freer elections has been evolving over the last decades. Such political liberalization could eventually lead to an institutionalized party system in Mexico.

Panama's political party institutionalization has moved

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[142] Mainwaring and Scully, p. 21.

from an inchoate category from 1968 to 1989, to an advancing category after the U.S. invasion. Panama's advancing level of political party institutionalization could lead, over time, to an institutionalized system, and a fuller consolidation of democracy. On the other hand, a resurgence of personalism could make Panama revert to the inchoate category. Given the significant progress made since 1989, the institutionalized scenario seems to be a more likely one than the inchoate scenario.

V. THE IMPACT OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY ON PANAMANIAN DEMOCRACY

A. BACKGROUND

On 17 December 1989, U.S. President George Bush decided upon a course of events that would in the next three days culminate in the largest use of U.S. military force (up to that time) since the Vietnamese War.[143] Early in the morning of 20 December, the streets, buildings, military headquarters, public offices, and waterways of Panama came under attack from almost 29,000 U.S. military troops acting under direct orders to remove the Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega from office and control of the military.[144]

Deposed president Noriega would subsequently be detained, deported and imprisoned in a U.S. federal prison, serving time for multiple felony convictions of money laundering, racketeering, and drug running. In addition to the convictions, a host of other untried allegations were lodged against him.

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[143] Ronald H. Cole, Operation Just Cause: The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Panama, February 1988 - January 1990 (Joint History Office, Office CJCS, 1995), p. 28.

[144] Malcolm McConnell, Just Cause: The Real Story of America's High-Tech Invasion of Panama (St. Martin's Press, 1991), p. 30.

Was the intervention necessary to install a democratic government in Panama or was it simply another in a long line of U.S. interventions to further U.S. interests? Given the long history of U.S. intervention and hegemony in Panama, what effects have U.S. foreign policy had on Panama's democracy? This chapter examines the impact of United States foreign policy on Panama's democracy.

This Panamanian case is a good test of the debate raised in chapter two: that of the relative importance of internal versus external variables in consolidating democracy. As Stepan affirms, the overwhelming majority of redemocratization cases have been and will likely continue to be ones in which domestic forces rather than external military forces play the key role. But, international forces also play an important role, and external intervention may have been critical in the Panamanian case.[145]

There are numerous examples of a democratic power (or powers) defeating an authoritarian regime, and seeking to install a democratic regime. Examples outside of Latin America include: the former West Germany, Japan, Italy, and Austria. To the surprise of many, these four countries have

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[145] Alfred Stepan, "Paths toward Redemocratization: Theoretical and Comparative Considerations," in Guillermo O'Donnell, et al, eds., Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives (John Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp., 64-65.

had an unbroken history of democratic rule since World War II.[146]

Within Latin American, examples of externally-imposed democracy include Panama, Grenada, and Haiti. They are distinctly different from the countries of Germany, Japan, Italy, and Austria. For while the latter were part of the core world capitalist system prior to World War II, Panama, Grenada, and Haiti can make no such claim.

B. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

To understand Panama, Operation Just Cause, and the U.S. attempt to mold and install a democratic government, it is necessary to understand the context within which the former Colombian province and United States foreign policy actors have interacted over the last century and a half.

As noted in chapter three, Panama's history, as well as its present-day social, economic, military, and political makeup have been dominated by the unique geographic position the country occupies as a land bridge between the continents of North and South America and as the narrowest land mass between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.[147]

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[146] Ibid., p. 71.

[147] Bruce W. Watson, and Peter G. Tsouras, eds., Operation Just Cause: The U.S. Intervention in Panama (Westview Press, 1991), p. 4.

Early Spanish colonizers built the *Camino Real*, or royal road, in the 16th century to link colonies on the Pacific coast with the sea ports of the Atlantic. Used as a main haul road to transport plundered gold and silver from the south, especially Peru, the spoils were loaded onto vessels bound for Spain and other distant ports.[148]

Tensions between the United States and the territory now known as Panama over sovereignty issues, expansionism, economic issues and nationalism can be traced back to as early as the 1840's.[149] The discovery of California gold in 1848 sparked a rush of steamship travel to and from both coasts of the United States. Ships often debarked and embarked their cargo in Panama using a variety of methods as conveyance across the isthmus, including horses, mules, wagon teams, canoes, and foot companies of local Panamanians. The advantage for the shippers was the time and distance saved by not having to travel around the tip of South America.

C. UNITED STATES INFLUENCE

In 1856, the U.S.-owned Panama Railroad Company completed construction of a cross isthmus railroad linking

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[148] Sandra W. Meditz, and Dennis M. Hanratty, eds., Panama: A Country Study (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), p., xxxiii.

[149] Tom Barry, Panama: A Country Guide (Inter-Hemispheric Education Center, 1990), p. 93.

the Atlantic city of Colon and Panama City on the Pacific coast.[150] The completion of the railroad significantly increased commercial activity on both sides of the isthmus.

However, the increased railroad and shipping transactions brought an accompanying increase in U.S. military and commercial presence. An alleged incident between a U.S. soldier and a Panamanian street vendor in 1856 served as a catalyst for rioting and social unrest which ultimately led to the deaths of a dozen U.S. citizens. On 19 September 1856, 160 U.S. Marines landed to protect the railroad and U.S. interests.[151]

This would be the first of five U.S. military interventions in Panama between 1856 and 1865. The United States would later intervene five more times by 1903, and a total of 19 times from 1856 to the present, under the guise of property protection, election supervision, democracy stabilization, or other reasons.[152]

In 1903, when Colombia spurned United States overtures for a trans-isthmus canal treaty, the U.S.S. Dixie and U.S.S. Nashville sailed to Panama to prevent Colombia from quashing an independence revolt. U.S. troops were put ashore

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[150] Ibid., p. 93.

[151] Ibid., p. 93.

[152] Ibid., p. 100.

3 November 1903 to ensure that Colombian soldiers did not interfere, and Panama declared their independence from Colombia. The United States then signed a treaty under suspicious pretenses with a Frenchman, Philippe Bunau-Varilla, who stood to gain $40 million.[153]

Bunau-Varilla was not only interested in selling the remaining assets of the French company which had earlier tried to build a canal, but he also was the lone negotiator and sole representative of the Panamanian side. The fact that the United Stated did not negotiate and sign a treaty with the Panamanian delegation, who followed Bunau-Varilla to New York by a few days, would prove to be a near constant source of irritation for Panama from that time forward.

The Panamanian government angrily protested the 'renunciation of sovereignty' in the treaty, the terms agreed upon by Bunau-Varilla, and the fact that a French citizen disobeyed the Panamanian government's instructions. Those sentiments would be ever-present and passed down to following generations of Panamanians, much to the consternation of the United States. In the 1970s, a documentary film was made in Panama depicting the independence time frame and the signing of the treaty. It was popularly titled, "The Treaty that No

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[153] Walter LaFeber, The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective (Oxford University Press, 1989), pp., 28-29.

Panamanian Ever Signed."[154]

The treaty of concessions and payments allowed the United States to build, maintain, and secure a trans-isthmus canal in perpetuity. The treaty also served to solidify the status of Panama as an unofficial protectorate of the United States in that Panama ceded judicial power, rights, power, and privileges in the Canal Zone to the United States to the exclusion of Panama. In return, the United States guaranteed the independence of Panama.[155]

In August of 1914, ocean traffic commenced transit through the completed canal beginning a still critical merchant, domestic and military reliance upon the trans-isthmus route. With the canal's completion and operation, it became Panama's economic base, continuing to the present day. As a modern day country born under the wings of the United States, Panama continued to serve in a subservient capacity in a variety of ways to the United States.

D. DEMOCRACY REINSTITUTED

The 21 years of pseudo-democracy under Torrijos, mingled with militaristic praetorianism, added to the complexity of

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[154] Ibid., p. 31.

[155] John Major, Prize Possession: The United States and the Panama Canal, 1903-1979 (Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp., 15-20.

the problem facing the U.S. government and in-country Military Support Group established in Panama after execution of Operation Just Cause. Dictator Noriega had been preceded by Omar Torrijos Herrera, who rose from the ranks of middle class officer to become head of the military and titular head of the political process. It was Jose Antonio Remon, who created and institutionalized the National Guard from what was at that time the National Police.[156]

Remon's National Guard would later evolve into the Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) that Noriega would use to crush civil unrest with unmitigated severity, and who would later oppose the U.S. strike forces of Operation Just Cause.[157] This set the stage for perhaps the biggest challenge of all, after successfully overthrowing Noriega, that of restoring law and order, allowing political parties free and open access to government, and fostering a representative, democratic governmental process.

E. ECLIPSING EVENTS

Operation Blue Spoon, later changed to Just Cause, was tasked out from the Joint Chiefs of Staff in February of 1988, shortly after Noriega had been indicted by a federal

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[156] Watson and Tsouras, p. 59.

[157] Ibid., p. 28.

grand jury in Miami, Florida.[158] By October of that year, the final drafts were approved and in place, awaiting execution should the need arise.

A full year and two months passed before their implementation would occur. As early as October 1987, representatives of Panama and the United States discussed options for Noriega's departure from power, including: retirement from politics, retirement from the military, and exile.[159] These and all subsequent offers were ultimately refused by Noriega. In June of 1989, when it became obvious that Noriega would not step down from power or accept a political compromise in any form, the operational plans were amended to include the capture and removal of Noriega.

Late in the evening of 16 December 1989, after members of the PDF fired into the vehicle of Marine Captain Dick Haddad, Marine Lieutenant Bob Paz, one of three passengers, died of his wounds. A U.S. Navy Seal, part of the advance special warfare group sent to Panama in case of eventual fighting, and his wife, were witnesses to the shooting. PDF members detained the U.S. Navy lieutenant and his wife, beating him severely and threatening her before releasing them to U.S. authorities. These encounters, coupled with the

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[158] Cole, p. 7.

[159] Luis E. Murillo, The Noriega Mess: The Drugs, The Canal, and Why America Invaded (Video Books, 1995), pp. 625-626.

past actions of Noriega and the PDF, led President Bush to decide that military intervention in Panama was the only recourse which ensured the safety of Americans in Panama and the required security of the canal zone. On Sunday, 17 December 1989, he gave the go-ahead for Operation Just Cause.

F. ADMINISTRATIVE HOUSEKEEPING

After making the decision to execute Operation Just Cause, President Bush and the administration provided thinly-veiled press conferences and releases in an attempt to prepare the American public for the coming intervention. On Tuesday, 19 December 1989, Bush kept to his planned schedule, however took time to notify several key congressional leaders that had not been informed of the upcoming operation.[160]

Officials in Washington even told reporters in Washington that they should follow events in Panama closely, and 'stay tuned through the evening'. For the Americans in Panama, there arose an increased suspicion that something was afoot, and then later confirmed by reported numerous leaks from active duty soldiers.[161]

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[160] Kevin Buckley, Panama: The Whole Story (Simon & Schuster, 1991), p. 232.

[161] Ibid., p. 233.

G. CRUSHING ACTION

There were few military surprises as the battle unfolded. From the beginning, the operation was designed to minimize casualties to civilians and even PDF units deemed less loyal to Noriega. When the 193rd Brigade attacked PDF headquarters, La Comandancia, they did so without the use of tanks or gunships in the face of fierce snipers and heavy resistance. This was intentionally done to prevent unnecessary civilian casualties.

At every affordable opportunity, PDF units and individuals were allowed the opportunity to surrender. The rules of engagement dictated that minimum necessary force would be used, and anyone who was trying to surrender would be allowed to do so.[162]

It was the opinion of both the U.S. military commanders and civilian leadership that a Panamanian police force would have to be organized in some fashion in the aftermath of the operation. Therefore, the resultant police force would have to be constituted from something and that entity would most likely be components of the dismantled PDF.[163]

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[162] Clarence E. Briggs, Operation Just Cause: A Soldier's Eyewitness Account (Stackpole Books, 1990), p. 28.

[163] Richard H. Schultz, In the Aftermath of War: U.S. Support for Reconstruction and Nation-Building in Panama Following Just Cause (Air University Press, 1993), p. 29.

H. AFTERMATH MYOPIA

In the wake of the complete military victory, the task remaining was preparing, training and establishing a Panamanian government to guide the country. The name of the follow-on operation to restore peace and a democratic process to Panama was initially termed 'Blind Logic;' the name would later be changed to 'Operation Promote Liberty.' The U.S. government widely overestimated the level of professionalism that remained of the government bureaucracy.

Under Noriega, unemployment had risen to 35 percent, and Panama's debt was one of the highest in the world, on a per capita basis.[164] From the pieces, a responsible government was supposed to be formed. General Thurman, who replaced General Woerner as the United States Commander in Chief, Southern Command in September of 1989 later stated,

> I did not even spend five minutes on Blind Logic during my briefing as the incoming CINC in August . . . . The least of my problems at that time was Blind Logic . . . . We put together the campaign plan for Just Cause and probably did not spend enough time on the restoration.[165]

Gen. Thurman's observations were perceptive; the operation was put together on an almost ad hoc basis with

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[164] Meditz and Hanratty, p. 168.

[165] Schultz, p. 16.

limited prior planning and poor integrated support. With competing directional guidance not only within the Military Support Group (MSG) which had been set up to assist in the post conflict phase, but within the embassy as well, the operation's infancy stage was a recipe for failure.

The initial goals of Operation Promote Liberty were multi-dimensional. They included the following objectives: restore basic functions throughout Panama City; establish a police force; provide emergency food distribution; create a night watch using helicopters with spotlights; protect property; supervise Panamanian contractors in cleaning up the city; restore the production and distribution of newspapers; and develop a grassroots organization to 'sell' the Endara government to the public.[166]

On the eve of the 20 December invasion, Guillermo Endara, Arias Calderon and Guillermo (Billy) Ford were invited to dinner at Howard Air Force Base, which they accepted. After being sworn to secrecy, the three men were briefed in broad outline of the unfolding U.S. intervention, and then taken to Fort Clayton where the head of the Panamanian Commission on Human Rights, Osvalvo Velasquez, swore in Endara as President, Calderon as first Vice-President, and Ford as second Vice-President of the new

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[166] Cole, p. 53.

Panamanian government.[167]

In news interviews the morning of the 20 December, President George Bush, with an emphasis on the democratic aspects of the operation, would cite four goals of the invasion:

> . . . to safeguard the lives of Americans, to defend democracy in Panama, to combat drug trafficking and to protect the integrity of the Panama Canal treaty.[168]

According to the State Department, United States Panamanian policy had four main objectives for post invasion Panama in conjunction with the U.S.-installed civilian coalition government. In addition to removing Noriega from power and installing a representative government (both accomplished), the objectives included:

> (1) Assist in economic reconstruction and development, with an emphasis on privatization as a strategy to decrease the size of the public sector;
> (2) Assist the Panamanian government toward achieving its goal of an apolitical police force;
> (3) Continue implementation of the Panama Canal treaty and needed maintenance of the canal, and
> (4) Gain Panamanian cooperation on narcotics enforcement issues.[169]

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[167] McConnell, p. 93.

[168] Margaret E. Scranton, The Noriega Years: U.S. Panamanian Relations 1981-1990 (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), p. 203.

[169] Scranton p. 213.

I. DEMILITARIZATION

On 22 December, a short day and a half after the intervention, the Endara government announced that it was forming a new *Fuerza Publica* (PF), or national police force, to take the place of the beaten and dismantled PDF. The qualifying standards for the PF were: no history of criminal activity, no involvement with the former PDF Dignity Battalions, and for prior PDF members, only individuals who held the rank of captain and below were supposed to be considered.[170]

At the inauguration of the new police force, rather intense guerrilla sniper and mortar attacks occurred from factions still loyal to the PDF. It seems strangely foretelling that Panama's new police force would come under attack from the moment of its creation. In fact, first Vice-President Arias Calderon, placed in overall charge of building the new Public Force, would last only until April 1991, when Endara expelled Calderon from the administration.[171]

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[170] McConnell, p. 251.

[171] Carlos Guervara Mann, Panamanian Militarism: A Historical Interpretation (Ohio University Press, 1996), p. 195.

J. EFFECTIVENESS/NECESSITY

Has the new PF been effective? Not according to several writers. Carlos Mann describes the PF as utterly incapable of handling their assigned duties, with an accompanying breakdown in law and order. Additionally, violence is reported on the increase at an alarming rate that has scared Panamanian society.[172]

Was an intervention necessary to install a democratic government, as U.S. President George Bush stated? In view of Noriega's repeated refusals to step down, it can be argued that an external intervention was necessary to bring about a transitional government.

According to Thomas Carothers, one of the core failures of the Reagan administration's Panama policy was not the failure of the economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure to have Noriega leave peacefully, but it was the years of blind tolerance and cooperation with the dictator as he destroyed what existed of the civilian political process.[173] The current U.S. administration's foreign policy goals of engagement and enlargement in support of fledgling democracies has often been characterized as different from

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[172] Ibid., p. 196.

[173] Thomas Carothers, In The Name of Democracy: U.S. Policy Toward Latin America in the Reagan Years (University of California Press, 1991), p. 179.

the direct economic, diplomatic, and armed intervention policies of the Reagan and Bush administrations.

Viewed objectively though, the current foreign policy goals build upon the efforts of previous administrations to support democratic regime transitions within Latin America.[174]

One of the three main tenets of the national security strategy as outlined by the Clinton administration is to "promote democracy abroad."[175] In this strategy, emphasis is placed on the difference that U.S. involvement can make through engagement in democratic and economic processes.

Furthermore, democratic states are viewed as less threatening to each other and more likely to cooperate on international security and developmental issues.[176] Under the terms of the Torrijos-Carter treaty of 1977 (in consonance with the policy of engagement and enlargement), the United States has reduced the military presence in Panama, and is

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[174] For example, Chile and Paraguay both received diplomatic attention during the Reagan and Bush administrations with the goal of supporting emerging democratic governments in those countries.

[175] United States Government, Executive, The White House, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), p. i.

[176] This is known as the democratic peace thesis. See especially Bruce Russett, Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World (Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 5-25.

scheduled to continue scaling down.[177]

The United States no longer has a large military presence in Panama and has shifted the burden of responsibility for Panamanian democratic consolidation to Panama. This is positive not only for Panama, but also for Latin America.

K. CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY

Will a representative government be able to continue in Panama? Given the long history of authoritarianism, nepotism, corruption, and military intervention by both United States and Panamanian forces, Panama will be pulled in different directions.

In 1994, a short four years and six months after crushing U.S. military intervention and restoration of civilian rule, Panamanians voted into office Ernesto Perez Balladares of the Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD). Balladares had close ties with Noriega, holding several key positions within the PRD during Noriega's regime. In 1984, Balladares was a member of the PRD's ruling directorate and

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[177] The U.S. Southern Command has moved headquarters and staff to Miami, Florida from Panama. Seven other bases including: Howard Air Force Base, Rodman Naval Station, and Fort Sherman are to be handed over to Panama in 1998 and 1999. The U.S. bases injected between $200 million and $300 million a year into the Panamanian economy, which Panama hopes to regain through the privatization of those bases, and at least one of the former bases may become a regional anti-drug center. See "Diplomats Displace Soldiers", Navy Times, 19 January 1998, p. 26.

was thought to be in a fairly good position to be nominated by Noriega for the presidency.[178]

The irony of Balladares being returned to office is that the United States moved against Noriega and the PRD, but the PRD is still in power in Panama. Although ostensibly 'cleansed' from its past as the political arm of Noriega's PDF, considerable questions remain concerning the PRD's true character.

Ultimately, there is a quandary facing the United States and Panama. On one side stand those who view U.S. interests in Panama as vital to stability and security of the hemisphere. On another side stand those who view U.S. hegemony in Panama as just another example of U.S. imperialism. In between, lie those who view the United States and Panama as important to regional and hemispheric stability, but wish that the United States would proceed with caution, moderation, and respect for Panama's sovereignty.

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[178] Luis E. Murillo, The Noriega Mess: The Drugs, The Canal, and Why America Invaded (Video Books, 1995), p. 341.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

It remains unclear the extent to which Panamanian political parties will be able to continue further institutionalization. The signs and indicators of a fairly healthy political party system are evident in Panama, and the factors and underlying currents of their political system are sound. Remarkably, Panamanian political parties and fundamental democratic principles appear to have been reaffirmed, in the 1990s, in spite of 21 years of near dictatorial rule, and over a century of U.S. intervention.

In analyzing the electoral volatility and effective number of political parties in Panama before and after 21 years of military praetorianism, the characteristics remain very close to each other, i.e., the distinguishing features did not change significantly. While there is wide support for political parties, and elections appear to be acknowledged as the most legitimate path for effecting change, there also exists criticism of what many Panamanians view as entrenched corruption. For Panama, it is possible for the political party system and actors to consolidate into a more developed institutionalized system. However, that could only occur in the 21st century.

United States foreign policy has had a significant impact, shaping the Panamanian political landscape. Most notably, in recent years, was the 1989 intervention that

deposed the latest in a series of corrupt military strongmen and reinstituted democratic processes. This has allowed for the beginning of democratic consolidation to take place. Nonetheless, there exist multiple obstacles to full transition and consolidation.

The analytical framework that Mainwaring and Scully posit is adequate to the extent that it provides the conceptual tools to analyze the electoral and party factors present in a country. The model falls short in that it does not account for the Panamanian case. The model, therefore, could be improved by an additional category, 'advancing group,' falling in between the ends of the spectrum -- inchoate and institutionalized.

The modified model, with a fourth descriptive category, advancing group, appears as shown in Figure 4.1, page 95, "Modified Model of Latin America Political Party Institutionalization." Panama should fall in the fourth category, the advancing group. Although displaying many of the political party traits of an institutionalized system, the Panamanian foundations are not as strong as those in institutionalized systems. The Panamanian political parties have fairly stable roots in society and are indeed more grounded than those in the inchoate group, while a majority of the political actors view parties and the electoral process as legitimate. Furthermore, in the advancing group, seldom is the party subjugated to the interests of aspiring

leaders, and the party has a moderately developed status and views associated with the party.

As Mainwaring and Scully argue, political party institutionalization is not a sufficient condition for democracy. However, political party institutionalization is a necessary condition. Furthermore, it is unlikely that Panama's political party system would have been able to further institutionalize, without the United States intervention in December 1989. That institutionalization has facilitated the ongoing consolidation of democracy in Panama.

The fact though that an external intervention was necessary to restore democracy suggests that there were major internal obstacles to democracy, such as the lack of an opposition sufficiently strong enough to bring about change, and the pervasiveness of nepotism and corruption that were opposed to change.

In conclusion, the prospects for the further development of an improved bilateral relationship between the United States and Panama are good, assuming that there are no radical changes in either country that would call into question the political and economic realities on which the current relationship is based.

Regardless which party controls the Panamanian presidency and/or Congress in the foreseeable future, a good relationship with Panama will remain a high U.S. priority, for domestic, economic and political reasons. In actuality,

the acrimony with which Panama viewed U.S. policies has diminished with the end of the Cold War. Furthermore, the absence of a shared border between the United States and Panama means that the bilateral relationship is not as complex as the U.S.-Mexico relationship.[179]

On the Panamanian side, as long as the country remains committed to democratic processes, conflicts between Panama City and Washington will most likely remain manageable. At the same time, however, Panama's approach to the United States may also become more multi-faceted.

The expanding press freedom that has characterized Panama since the end of de facto military rule, combined with the spread of mass communications, will bring about increasing public participation in the foreign policy making process. Specifically, the rising role of the Panama Congress in formulating foreign policy should eventually reflect more the views of the country's diverse citizens.[180] This means that bilateral relations between the United States and Panama will increasingly come to resemble the kind of relationship that the Unites States has with other

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[179] Susan K. Purcell and Riordan Roett, eds., Brazil Under Cardoso (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), pp. 100.

[180] See Purcell and Roett for a good synopsis on how communication change affects bilateral relationships, p. 101.

democracies, not only in Latin America, but also in Europe and Asia.

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APPENDIX A

THIRD WAVE REGIME TRANSITIONS[181]

Transition Type	Countries			
Transformation	Taiwan	Spain	Turkey	Hungary
	Mexico	India	Brazil	Peru
(16 countries)	Chile	USSR	Bulgaria	Guatemala
	Sudan	Pakistan	Nigeria	Ecuador
Transplacement	Poland	Nepal	Uruguay	Honduras
	Nicaragua	Mongolia	Bolivia	Korea
(11 countries)	S. Africa		Czechoslovakia	
	El Salvador			
Replacement	Portugal	Greece	Argentina	Romania
(6 countries)	Philippines		East Germany	
Intervention*	Grenada	**Panama**		

(2 countries) *The case could be made that Haiti now belongs among this group. Additionally, some scholars debate whether Nicaragua and El Salvador belong to the Intervention type of regime change vice Transplacement.

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[181] Adapted from Samuel Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century (University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), Table 3.1, p. 113. For a complete list of regime party type and Huntington's assessment of democratic liberalization, see pp. 105-125.

APPENDIX B

PRESIDENTS OF PANAMA: 1940-1998[182]

President	Date Inaugurated	Date Vacated
Arnulfo Arias	Oct. 1, 1940	Oct. 9, 1941
Ricardo de la Guardia	Oct. 9, 1940	June 15, 1945
Enrique Jimenez	June 15, 1945	Sept. 30, 1948
Domingo Diaz	Oct. 1, 1948	July 28, 1949
Daniel Chanis	July 28, 1949	Nov. 20, 1949
Roberto Chiari	Nov. 20, 1949	Nov. 24, 1949
Arnulfo Arias	Nov. 25, 1949	May 10, 1951
Alcibiades Arosemena	May 10, 1951	Sept. 30, 1952
Jose Remon	Oct. 1, 1952	Jan. 2, 1955
Jose Guizado	Jan. 3, 1955	Jan. 15, 1955
Ricardo Espinosa	Jan. 15, 1955	Sept. 30, 1956
Ernesto de la Guardia	Oct. 1, 1956	Sept. 30, 1960
Roberto Chiari	Oct. 1, 1960	Sept. 30, 1964
Marco Robles	Oct. 1, 1964	Sept. 30, 1968
Arnulfo Arias	Oct. 1, 1968	Oct. 11, 1968

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[182] Adapted from Luis E. Murillo, The Noriega Mess: The Drugs, The Canal, and Why America Invaded (Video Books, 1995), Appendix B. For a complete list of functionary and puppet presidents from October 12, 1968 to December 20, 1989 see Murillo, Appendix B, Presidents of Panama: 1940-1994, pp. 915-918.

APPENDIX B (continued)

* * Democratic Process Interrupted, Military Rule Begins * *

Succession of 'Puppet' Presidents, Real rulers were:

President	Date Inaugurated	Date Vacated
Boris Martinez	Oct. 12, 1968	Feb. 23, 1969
Omar Torrijos	Feb. 24, 1969	July 31, 1981
Manuel Noriega	Aug. 1, 1981	Dec. 20, 1989

* * Democratic Process Resumed, Military Rule Ends * *

President	Date Inaugurated	Date Vacated
Guillermo Endara	Dec. 20, 1989	Aug. 31, 1994
Ernesto Balladares	Sept. 1, 1994	present *

* next regular elections are scheduled to be conducted in May 1999, for the presidential period of September 1999 to August 2004.

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